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ARAB TIMES

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Arab Times wishes a Happy New Year to all our readers

GCC peace effort

UAE to negotiate with Iran on war

MUSCAT, Dec 30. (Agencies): The GCC summit which ended yesterday in Riyadh had chosen the UAE to negotiate with Iran on the Gulf war. Oman's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yousef Bin Alawi said today.

Arab Times in an exclusive story from Riyadh first informed the world yesterday that the GCC will send an envoy to Tehran for talks on the Iraq-Iran war.

Al Alawi, said: "The summit took a decision to negotiate with Iran." He also noted "Oman's good relations with Tehran."

In remarks to the state-owned daily newspaper Oman, carried by the official Oman News Agency today, he said the talks were "aimed at reducing tension and paving the way for international efforts" for peace.

Mediator's role

He said the summit delegated the UAE "to play a mediator's role because of its good ties with Iran."

The same newspaper yesterday quoted an unnamed summit official as saying the GCC directives moved the council away from demands to boycott Iran "to closer contacts and consolidation of true relationships."

"These will lead to important results, including Iranian guarantees against attacking GCC states and paving the way for international efforts to end the war," the official was quoted as saying in the newspaper.

At a press conference after the

summit, Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal disclosed that a report on GCC contacts with Tehran was presented to leaders of the council states during the summit.

He added that the Gulf states had contacts with the Tehran government before the summit and would initiate fresh dialogue after the Riyadh meetings.

The Iranian Prime Minister Mir Hussein Mousavi, when asked after a cabinet meeting in Tehran about reports that the GCC might send an envoy to discuss peace efforts with Tehran, said: "There have been some talks in this regard and messages have been sent so far."

Prepared

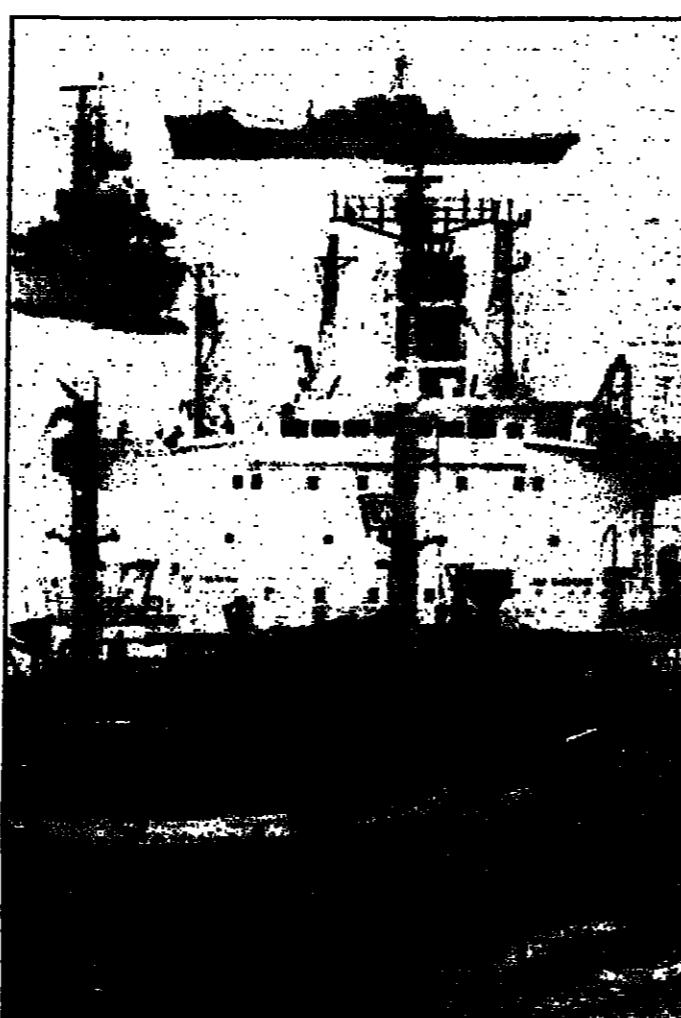
In the event of the GCC sending an envoy to Tehran, Iran would be prepared to receive him and listen to their words," Mousavi said.

He also reminded that "regional countries would be best advised to settle their own affairs themselves instead of relying on foreign powers."

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, said during the GCC summit, that if the war continued to escalate, GCC members would call on foreign assistance to meet security threats to their territory.

Syria is also trying to cool tension between Tehran and the GCC.

"The ball is now in Iran's court. It is the interest and hope of all Arab states that Iran respond to the call of peace," Prince Saud Al Faisal said at the close of the summit.



The British frigate York (middle) moves between the Panamanian 48,225-tonne tanker World Spring and an Iranian warship (background) which tried to intercept it on its way to the Strait of Hormuz in the southern Gulf yesterday. (Reuter wirephoto)

UK frigate saves ship from attack

DUBAI, Dec 30. (Agencies): The British frigate York placed itself between two tankers it was escorting and an approaching Iranian warship in the Gulf today.

A photographer flying over the scene 35 miles northwest of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, said the York intervened as the Iranian vessel turned towards the Panamanian flag tanker World Spring.

The York's intervention came as last July it escorted 22 convoys of US-flagged ships through the waterway to protect them against attacks by Iran.

In the so-called tanker war, the Iranians singled out Kuwaiti ships for attack because of its support for Iraq, Tehran's enemy in the seven-year-old Gulf war.

Deficit budget for Saudi Arabia

RIYADH, Dec 30. (QNA): King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz yesterday signed a special decree outlining the Saudi general budget for the year 1988-89.

The budget was discussed at a special cabinet meeting held yesterday afternoon.

According to the new budget, the state's income is evaluated at 105.3 billion Saudi riyals, while expenditures are expected to be about 141.2 billion Saudi riyals.

It has been decided that eight billion riyals will be taken from the general reserves and added to the incomes. Moreover, the Ministry of Finance and National Economy will be authorized to borrow 30 billion riyals in the new year by issuing bonds.

Israel weighs expulsions as another Palestinian dies

TEL AVIV, Dec 30. (Agencies):

A 23rd Palestinian demonstrator died after being shot during recent anti-Israeli riots and Israel's inner cabinet met today to consider whether to carry out expulsions from occupied territories.

Mustafa Issa Al Beik, 17, who was shot in the head at Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip on Dec 21, died overnight at a hospital in southern Israel, the Israeli Army said — the first death since the disturbances eased a week ago.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir summoned his 10-man inner cabinet to discuss whether to carry out expulsions from occupied territories in the face of objections from the United States, Israel's closest ally, Israel's closest ally.

radio reported.

After the meeting, the ministers refused to talk to reporters. Shmuel Goren, Israeli coordinator in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, said a decision was pending.

Repeat

"The matter of expulsions isn't finished, isn't agreed," he said, "I'll just repeat what the defence minister said — that expulsions are one of the means we deploy in the fight against disturbances."

Israel says it detained 900 people during two weeks of disturbances in the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

Defense authorities want to expel about 50 Palestinian activists but a decision has been postponed because of political and

judicial concerns, security sources said.

Washington opposes expulsions, partly in the interests of good relations with Israel's moderate neighbours, Egypt and Jordan. Israel has expelled Palestinians to Jordan in the past.

Cappucci

PLO leader Yasser Arafat asked Archbishop Hilarion Capucci yesterday to end a hunger strike he began eight days ago in protest at Israeli handling of unrest in occupied territories.

Officials at Rome's Arab League office, where the 63-year-old head of the Greek Catholic (Melkite) church in Jerusalem has been staging the protest, said Arafat had telephoned the coryman with the request.

DAY BY DAY

WE said that this year there would be more flexibility, so the decision of the Ministry of Interior cancelling New Year's celebration parties surprised us, especially since these parties are exactly like any other party held at hotels or "dinner with music".

I really don't understand why these parties are prohibited. It looks as if we are telling the people who are interested in celebrating this occasion that they should travel out of the country to do so.

This is an important part of any social life.

Zahed Matar

HOROSCOPE '88
FIND out what is in store for you next year. Your horoscope for 1988 will be published from Jan 2.

House collapse

BOMBAY, Dec 30. (Reuter): A five-storey building housing eight families in south Bombay collapsed in heaps of concrete and twisted steel today, killing at least 18 people, police said.

Expelled Chinese diplomats leave US

WASHINGTON, Dec 30. (UPI): Two diplomats from China, ordered out of the country for "incompatible" activities, have left the United States, the State Department said today.

A State Department spokesman said the Chinese embassy was told on Dec 22 to arrange the departure of the two diplomats because they were

"engaged in activities incompatible with their diplomatic status" — a phrase often used to refer to matters such as spying. Both officials had diplomatic immunity and have left the United States, the spokesman said.

The Washington Times, quoting a source close to the case, reported today that the diplomats were arrested after

one of them received what he believed were classified national security agency documents.

FBI agents arrested the assistant military attache Dec 21 as he and a double agent assisting US officials sat in a restaurant in Washington's Chinatown. It was not known whether the other diplomat was also at the restaurant then, the newspaper said.

Iran is not in a position to attack Kuwait: Saddam

Captain of ship loses sight

Mayhem as 18 are injured

Joint security strategy approved

GCC will send envoy to Tehran for talks on war

Hold Islamic summit to solve Gulf problems: Hassan

Opposition plan illegal: Ershad

Donor countries threaten to cut off aid to Bangladesh

Emergency ruled out

Unpaid workers living in agony to siege Dhaka illegal: Ershad

Opposition plan illegal: Ershad

Emergency ruled out

Opposition plan illegal: Ershad

Naxalites swap officials for jailed comrades

NEW DELHI, Dec 30. (AP): A left-wing extremist group today freed seven senior officials of southern Andhra Pradesh state following acceptance of their demand that jailed comrades be released without police escorts, the Press Trust of India said.

The news agency said the seven officials were freed before dawn by members of the Maoist Naxalite group after days of intense negotiations at Guntur in East Godavari district, 830 miles (1,335 km) southeast of New Delhi.

The state and central governments agreed on Monday night to the kidnappers' demand that eight members of their group captured in the past two weeks be released from jail in exchange for freedom for the hostages.

The prisoners were let out but kept under police guard at Guntur while negotiations shuttled between a command post in the village and the kidnappers' jungle hideout, trying to finalize the swap, the Press Trust said.

Demand

The breakthrough came last night, when authorities agreed to the extremists' demand that the prisoners' police guards be withdrawn and they be allowed to walk out of the village, the news agency said in a report from the state capital of Hyderabad.

Members of the underground Maoist group ambushed and abducted nine state officials on

Sun names two from New Year's honours list

Britain condemns breach of embargo

LONDON, Dec 30. (Reuter): The British government condemned a national newspaper as "absolutely disgraceful" today for publishing embargoed details of Queen Elizabeth's New Year's honours list 24 hours early.

The Sun tabloid daily, which has built its reputation supplying its readers with a constant stream of nude photographs and scandals, named the prospective recipients of two awards on the front page of its December 30 edition.

The incident comes less than two weeks after BBC reporter leaked in advance details of the Queen's Christmas speech to other journalists, angering Buckingham Palace.

A spokesman for Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said of the latest breach: "It is absolutely disgraceful." He said the embargo would not be lifted but that sanctions might be imposed on newspapers in future.

The New Year's honours are bestowed by Queen Elizabeth, on Thatcher's advice.

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Public quarrel between black leaders

Six killed in South African violence

JOHANNESBURG, Dec 30, (Reuter): A 12-year-old boy was among six people killed in Natal province, where a rising wave of black-against-black violence has touched off a rare public quarrel between two of South Africa's top black leaders.

A police report today covering violence in the past 24 hours listed four deaths, including the 12-year-old, in black townships near the Natal province capital of Pietermaritzburg. At least 10 houses were burnt down.

A fifth person was killed at

Scotburgh in a clash between tribal clans while a 21-year-old man was killed by being shot, stabbed and set alight after petrol and a mattress were thrown over him near the port of Durban.

"It is alleged that he had been intimidating people in the area," the terse report said.

Tempo

Pietermaritzburg townships, shanty towns built on rolling hills to the west of the city, have seen about 260 killings this year, with the tempo of violence rising since Christmas Eve.

No official toll has been given, but death tolls are kept by local newspapers and a church group monitoring the strife.

The main cause of the violence is a power struggle between the conservative Inkatha Zulu group and a leftist coalition of anti-apartheid organisations, the United Democratic Front (UDF).

Verbal sparring has broken out between the President of Inkatha, Zulu chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, and Nobel peace prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu, whose ideology matches that of many UDF followers although he himself is not a member of the organisation.

On Tuesday, Buthelezi hit out at Tutu, who on Sunday appealed to all sides in the Pietermaritzburg violence to end what he termed a ghastly spiral of unending killings.

Linked

In a statement, he accused Tutu of political posturing and of being linked with the "labyrinth of intrigue which purposefully

sets out to perpetuate the violence he now decries."

He said a call for peace should be addressed to the outlawed African National Congress (ANC) guerrilla organisation, which Inkatha views as the principal backer of the UDF.

Tutu retorted today: "Chief Buthelezi appears to think that his leadership is enhanced by denigrating others."

He said the cause of peace would not be advanced by mud-slinging and rejected Buthelezi's suggestion that he was biased.

Army takes over in Transkei

JOHANNESBURG, Dec 30, (Reuter): The Army toppled the government in the South African tribal homeland of Transkei today, the second bloodless coup in the territory in three months.

Coup leader General Bantu Holomisa told Reuter by telephone he had suspended the constitution, banned political activity and formed a military council to run the impoverished Indian Ocean territory, set up 11 years ago and recognised only by Pretoria.

"We have taken over," Holomisa, 32, said in a brief interview.

Corrupt

Holomisa masterminded a coup in September which led to the appointment of Stella Sigau as prime minister of Transkei.

Holomisa went on Transkei radio to announce the overthrow of the short-lived government. He told civil servants to go home until Thursday when he would announce more details of his move.

There was no immediate word on the fate of Sigau, hailed by Pretoria as Africa's first woman prime minister, and her cabinet.

Residents said Umtata, the Transkei capital, was quiet after Holomisa's announcement shortly after midday.

The September coup was staged by the Army in a bid to clean up Transkei notoriously corrupt government, but the military remained unhappy about graft, government officials said.

"But we will produce them only when Islam allows it and when we are compelled to do so," said Holomisa.

In London, the Independent newspaper reported that Iran had agreed to supply Libya with chemical arms in return for Scud Scud missiles.

It quoted informed sources in Tripoli and Tehran as saying Iran had developed chemical mortar shells and rockets designed for use against ships, tanks and troops.

They said Libya wanted to use the anti-tank and anti-troop weapons in Chad, where clashes between Chadian and Libyan forces are continuing despite a truce agreed between the two countries in September.

Iran would in return receive a dozen medium-range advanced Scud-B missiles, a weapon Iran has used to rocket Baghdad, the newspaper said.

Denktash wins \$200,000 in libel damages

NICOSIA, Dec 30, (AP): The leader of an opposition party in the Turkish Republic of northern Cyprus said today he will appeal a court judgement that he and his party's newspaper pay 200 million Turkish lira (\$200,000) damages to Rauf Denktash, President of the breakaway state.

Ozker Ozgur, chairman of the leftwing Republican Turkish Party, was quoted in the party paper "Yeniduzen" (new order) as saying the court judgement's "goal is to wipe out the opposition."

"All I own is a car and my wife owns a house," Ozgur told Yeniduzen, saying he would appeal to a higher court.

The damages, announced on Monday, are believed to be the highest ever assessed in a libel case in Cyprus.

The judgement was based on an article in Yeniduzen Dec. 16, 1985. The article used the Turkish word baba (fathers) referring to Denktash and his conservative political colleagues. The word was capitalised for emphasis.

In Turkish, the words baba (singular) or babalar have a double meaning. The normal meaning is father of children. A second meaning is mob leader or gangster.

The court ruled that the latter meaning was intended in the article.

Williams, a former cook, did not smoke, drink or take pills and she had said the secret of her longevity was a "meat and two veg" diet.

A spokeswoman at Swansea's Tuxedo nursing home, where she had lived for 17 years, said she died of old age.

Ershad vows to hold polls

DHAKA, Dec 30, (Reuter): President Hossain Mohammad Ershad has said fresh elections in Bangladesh will take place within the main opposition groups' demands.

"Boycott by big parties like the Awami League or the Bangladeshi Nationalist Party will not hinder polls. The country has more than 100 political parties," he told officials yesterday.

The two named parties, led by Ershad's arch rivals Sheikh Hasina and Begum Khaleda Zia, respectively, are the key factors in a continuing campaign by 21 opposition parties to topic him by strikes and demonstrations.

Ershad has refused to step down under pressure.

Progress

He said that repeated opposition-led strikes and violence set back economic and social progress that peace-loving Bangladeshis would not allow if any longer.

The President urged opposition leaders to change their mind and talk with him about resolving the political crisis.

"I also urge them to take part in the elections if they really wanted people's welfare and believed in democracy," he added.

Western diplomats said Ershad might again risk credibility if he really held elections with the major parties abstaining.

Hasina said in a statement today any election without the participation of the major parties would be a farce.

Ershad imposed a state of emergency on Nov 10 to thwart the mounting opposition protests and later dissolved the one-year-old Parliament to prepare for new polls.

Mousavi denies Iran making chemical weapons

NICOSIA, Dec 30, (Reuter): Iranian Prime Minister Mir-Hussein Mousavi denied today that Iran was making chemical weapons but said it could do so if necessary.

"The Islamic republic is capable of manufacturing chemical weapons and possesses the technology," the Iranian news agency Isna, quoted him as saying.

"But we will produce them only when Islam allows it and when we are compelled to do so," said Mousavi.

In London, the Independent newspaper reported that Iran had agreed to supply Libya with chemical arms in return for Scud Scud missiles.

It quoted informed sources in Tripoli and Tehran as saying Iran had developed chemical mortar shells and rockets designed for use against ships, tanks and troops.

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A team of surgeons headed by Doctor Mario Vigano of the San Matteo Hospital in the Northern Italian city of Pavia performed the operation on a 47-year-old Italian man.

The man, whose name was not released, was in good condition.

'Oldest' person dies at 114

SWANSEA, Wales, Dec 30, (UPI): A woman believed to be the oldest person in the world has died at the age of 114 years and 210 days, news reports said today.

Anna Williams, 114, died at a nursing home in the Welsh city of Swansea.

Williams, a former cook, did not smoke, drink or take pills and she had said the secret of her longevity was a "meat and two veg" diet.

A spokeswoman at Swansea's Tuxedo nursing home, where she had lived for 17 years, said she died of old age.



Soviet cosmonaut Romanenko enjoys his first meal after his return to earth. (Reuter wirephoto)

Homesick cosmonaut back to earth for New Year

MOSCOW, Dec 30, (Reuter): Homesick Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Romanenko has returned to earth after a record 326 days in space in time for traditional New Year celebrations with his family.

The Baikonur Space Centre.

The television showed him hugging and kissing them, a luxury not usually allowed to returning cosmonauts until after they have undergone detailed medical examinations and debriefings.

Soviet space chiefs had granted Romanenko concessions such as extra telephone calls, home from the space station Mir and less work since reports in the autumn said he was homesick.

Apparently a little shaky after being weightless for so long, Romanenko, 43, was helped to a waiting helicopter but doctors made a preliminary judgement that his health was good.

"I feel great. I'm satisfied with the work I did and glad to see you on the earth of Kazakhstan," he told reporters.

Soon after landing on the windswept plain about 80 km (50 miles) northeast of the town of Arkalyk, Romanenko was flown to Mir with his wife and children at

Tass news agency said all three men were awarded the Order of Lenin, the Soviet Union's top honour, for heroism in space.

Alexandrov went with Romanenko to meet relatives but Levchenko went by helicopter straight to Arkalyk, from where he piloted a TU-154 passenger plane to Moscow.

On the mission to gain experience for a future shuttle programme with reusable rockets, he had to show he could fly a plane right after returning from a condition of weightlessness.

The Soviet Union, which holds all the world space endurance records, is keeping its cosmonauts for longer periods in space partly in order to test human capacity for a future three-year flight to Mars and back.

But the psychological and medical implications of prolonged weightlessness are still not clear.

Leaking of submarine secrets to Soviets threatens Tridents

LONDON, Dec 30, (Reuter): The future effectiveness of Britain's independent nuclear deterrent is threatened by a betrayal of Western submarine secrets to the Soviet Union, a British defence publication said today.

But a British Defence Ministry spokesman told Reuters: "We have complete confidence in the quality of our submarines."

The 1988 edition of "British Warships and Auxiliaries" said the latest Soviet submarines were as quiet as Western craft, making it possible for them to track adversaries.

"The element of surprise making it possible to get in the first shot in war cannot be relied upon."

"Can there be any guarantee Western Trident submarines will

continue to enjoy freedom from detection by Russian hunter-killer submarines?" an introduction to the book asked.

The book said the advance was largely due to information passed to Moscow by the Walker family spy ring jailed in the United States last year. Four members of the family with high-level US naval intelligence links gave Moscow sensitive details of communications

INTERNATIONAL

Ozal wins vote of confidence

ANKARA, Dec 30. (AP): The new government of Premier Turgut Ozal, formed after a national election victory by his Motherland Party last month, won a vote of confidence today from the single-house parliament.

The vote was 290 to 153 in the 450-seat legislature. The rest did not vote.

Ozal won a second term in office, capturing 292 seats in the parliament with 36.3 per cent of the votes, in the Nov 29 elections.

Voting against the government were members of the main opposition Social Democratic Populist Party and the deputies from the centre-right True Path Party.

Ozal, architect of the country's 1980 economic recovery programme, has promised further economic liberalisation that will include privatisation of state-owned companies, a convertible Turkish lira and free interest rates during his second five-year term.

Policy goal

In his government programme presented to parliament last Friday, Ozal said gaining membership for Turkey in the European Economic Community would be a major policy goal.

The Premier also predicted that by the end of his five-year term exports would double to reach \$20 billion and tourism revenues would go up to \$5 billion from \$1.5 billion.

During the debate on the programme, televised nationwide for the first time, opposition party speakers criticising Ozal's failure to lower inflation, expected to reach 60 per cent this year.

Ozal said his failure to reduce the high inflation was due to the country's high economic growth rate of 7.5 per cent annually for the past two years.

Former Premier Suleyman Demirel, now the leader of the True Path Party, warned that the country would soon find itself in a major debt-servicing crisis.

Assad gets Gorbachev's message

DAMASCUS, Dec 30. (AP): Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has sent a letter to President Hafez Assad briefing him on the outcome of the superpower summit in Washington, the Syrian news agency reported today.

The letter was delivered today by Karen Brutents, deputy chairman of the international relations department at the central committee of the Soviet Communist Party, to Syrian Vice President Abdul-Halim Khaddam.

Soviet Ambassador to Damascus Alexander Dzasakov, attended the meeting, said the Syrian Arab News Agency.

It said Khaddam was also briefed on the Dec 7 summit between Gorbachev and US President Ronald Reagan. The two leaders signed a pact eliminating intermediate-range nuclear missiles from their arsenals.

"Various issues concerning the (Middle East) area and bilateral relations were also discussed during the meeting," Sana said.

Syria is Moscow's main Arab ally.

On Tuesday, Brutents met with Abdullah Al Ahmar, the assistant secretary general of the ruling Arab Baath Socialist Party.



South Korean riot police pushes away a farmer demonstrating outside the US Embassy against the possible lifting of a ban on imports of US beef. (Reuter wirephoto)

S. Korea prepares for assembly polls

Opposition urged to reunite

SEOUL, Dec 30. (AP): Opposition leader Kim Young-Sam today called for the two main opposition parties to reunite to work for defeat of the ruling party in the upcoming legislative elections.

Kim Young-Sam urged the breakaway Party for Peace and Democracy (PPD) to return to the Reunification Democratic Party (RDP) for a unified fight against the ruling party in the elections for the National Assembly.

"The opposition camp's unity is absolutely necessary in the coming general elections to surely carry out democratisation," he said.

The rival PPD, headed by opposition leader Kim Dae-Jung, promptly rejected the call.

The two Kims split the opposition by both insisting on running for President in the Dec 16 election despite widespread pleas for

a single candidate.

Kim Dae-Jung and his followers split away from the RDP to form a new party in mounting their presidential bid.

Apology

Ruling party candidate Rob Tac-Woo won the election with 36.6 per cent of the vote, and the two Kims apologised to the nation after admitting their split had robbed the opposition victory.

Kim Young-Sam got 28 per cent of the vote and Kim Dae-Jung got 27 per cent, according to the National Election Commission.

The opposition has charged the government resorted to massive fraud to win the election, but has provided little evidence.

Most people ignored opposition calls for protests after the election, instead blaming the two Kims for the defeat.

Kim Young-Sam had rebuffed earlier calls from Kim Dae-Jung

to reunite to oppose the ruling party after Roh's victory.

"It is in accord with reason and the people's aspirations that the opposition camp be united around the Reunification Democratic Party," Kim Young-Sam said today.

He again blamed Kim Dae-Jung for political ambition that split the opposition and ensured a government victory.

"Kim Dae-Jung should recognise the fact that he quit the RDP and turned away from efforts to field a single opposition candidacy simply to enable him to run," Kim Young-Sam said.

The rival PPD denounced Kim Young-Sam's call as an empty gesture and said it was "a political show to deceive the people once again."

A date for the National Assembly elections, which must be held before April, has not yet been set.

Seven letter bombs mailed to Israel

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, Dec 30. (AP): At least seven letter bombs originating in Turkey were mailed to addresses in Israel and Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank, police said today. Two people suffered slight injuries when one of the bombs exploded.

The remainder of the bombs were defused without causing injuries, police said in a statement.

The bombs were disguised as Christmas cards and the typewritten return address was listed as D. Nissim, Istanbul, Turkey, on all the white envelopes, the statement said.

Asked if he had any idea why the bombs were sent, Gadon said: "We are Jews, that's enough."

Police said letter bombs were mailed to Haifa and the Jewish West Bank settlement of Kiryat Arba. Israel Radio said other letter bombs were sent to Tel Aviv, the Tel Aviv suburb of Ramat Gan and the town of Or Yehuda near Ben Gurion international airport.

In Or Yehuda, two men were slightly injured in their hands when they touched the envelope and it exploded, the radio said. One of the men was hospitalised.

Volcano erupts in Indonesia

JAKARTA, Dec 30. (UPI): More than 1,200 people have been evacuated from an Indonesian island following sudden volcanic eruptions, officials said today.

The 7,815-foot (2,382m) Mount Mandasawu of Flores Island in the eastern Indonesian province of East Nusa Tenggara, 1,450 km east of Jakarta, started erupting Monday night. No casualties were reported.

An official in the provincial capital of Kupang said the volcano spewed sulphur and dust Tuesday. Lava was reported burning forest areas and clove plantations at the foot of the mountains.

It was also reported that earth tremors were felt by villagers before the eruption.

People living in the surrounding areas had never seen the volcano erupt, the official said.

"We have evacuated more than 1,200 people from the nearest villages," he said, adding that another 3,500 are ready to be evacuated.

Most are being housed in schools and government buildings in a district about 20 km east of the volcano.

War and starvation ravage south Sudan

JUBA, Sudan, Dec 30. (Reuter): Mass starvation is looming in Sudan's southern Equatoria province with rebels mining roads and blocking food convoys reaching emaciated refugees.

A senior provincial official told Reuters that war and drought had brought the spectre of starvation to 900,000 people - representing 75 per cent of Equatoria's entire population.

Refugees arriving in the provincial capital Juba said people were dying every day from diseases related to malnutrition in the barren wastelands they had deserted.

They cited Nimule as one of the worst-affected areas.

A reporter, on a two-week tour of the region, saw 7,000 destitutes eking out an existence in Lulugu refugee camp on the outskirts of Juba, largest town in southern Sudan.

Children with matchstick legs clung to exhausted mothers too weak to breast-feed them and men were reduced to walking skeletons. The camp depends entirely on erratic food handouts which were becoming increasingly rare.

"Twice I was attacked and beaten up because I dared to tell them there was simply no food and they should wait," said an official of the private relief agency Sudan Aid.

Ramos foresees a hard year for Aquino

Philippines faces rebellions

MANILA, Dec 30. (Agencies): Philippine Army leaders today warned against an intensified communist insurgency war and a resumption of the dormant Muslim separatist rebellion in 1988.

The military made its warning as communist rebels started to close 1987 with a bang, gunning down an Army major in his car and storming a police station and an Army patrol base in three provincial attacks.

Armed forces chief General Fidel Ramos at a news conference cited the communist New People's Army "as the most serious and enduring problem" facing President Corazon Aquino's government in the coming year.

Ramos said he expected the NPA to exploit the fluid political situation and the country's economic hardship "by intensifying tactical operations and urban terrorism" to weaken both the government and the armed forces.

Major-General Eduardo Ermita, Ramos' deputy, said Muslim rebels dreaming of a separate homeland on Mindanao island in the south were also girding for war. A tenuous ceasefire has been in effect in the area since early 1986.

"They are preparing for a

resumption of hostilities," Ermita said, adding that the Muslims apparently intended to time an offensive with the Organisation of Islamic Conference's annual meeting next March in Jordan.

Status

The rebel Moro National Liberation Front is seeking to upgrade its status in the OIC from observer to full member.

Some members of the OIC back the rebellion.

Ramos said "ultra-rightist groups" were also expected to continue trying to destabilise the Aquino government with commando-style attacks.

He appeared, however, to rule out the possibility that such groups, composed of mutinous soldiers and die-hard civilian followers of ousted President Ferdinand Marcos, could mount as serious a coup attempt as that which nearly toppled Aquino last August.

Despite the threats from the right and left, Ramos said the military was confident "internal security ... will be stabilised" in the coming year.

Ramos dismissed claims by former US Defence Undersecretary Richard Stiwell that Aquino's Army was incapable of fighting the communists and that captured coup leader Colonel

Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan still enjoyed significant Army support.

Meanwhile, communist rebels were reported today to be demanding ransom of 2 million pesos (\$100,000) for two South Korean engineers kidnapped last month at a road construction site in northern Luzon.

The investigators said they may be unable to determine who was responsible for the collision of the 2,215-ton passenger ship Dona Paz and the 629-ton oil tanker Vector.

The vessels collided in the Tablas Straits off Mindoro Island, exploded and sank. Only two crewmen, both from the Vector, were among the 26 survivors.

The coast guard said Tuesday only 108 bodies had been found and earlier figures were wrong because of multiple reporting of bodies. It said Friday that 292 bodies had been recovered, but revised that to 133 on Saturday.

During a memorial service last night at a sports complex, where bodies of victims have been taken for identification, Mrs Aquino told relatives that her government will consult them on compensation and other actions.

Rudy Villanueva, legal officer of coast guard marine inquiry board probing the collision, said his panel was hampered by a lack of witnesses.

Compensation

Two other Korean engineers, also employed by Hanil, were kidnapped by rebels last year but released after 52 days in captivity.

Last week, the Korean Residents Association of Manila sent a petition to President

West sending experts in disguise: Tass

Kabul to try French newsman

MOSCOW, Dec 30. (Agencies): A French journalist captured by Soviet-backed Afghan forces in northern Afghanistan in September will be put on trial soon, the official Soviet news agency Tass reported today.

Tass said the Afghan authorities had completed an investigation into the case of Alain Guillot, a freelance news photographer arrested on Sept 12 for illegally entering Afghanistan with Pakistan-based Muslim rebels.

It said Guillot, 45, had also been investigated for "collecting information infringing on the state and military interests of the Republic of Afghanistan."

The wording suggested he

Review resists Singapore press curb

No apology, says magazine

SINGAPORE, Dec 30. (UPI): The editor of a weekly news magazine refused to comply with a deadline set by Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew to retract and apologise for allegations in an article riling Lee.

"We are denying the article is defamatory in any way," said Derek Davies, editor of the Far Eastern Economic Review.

Davies said attorneys for the Hong Kong-based news magazine informed lawyers representing Lee that there will be no retraction, apology or damages paid over the Dec 17 article focusing on a meeting between Lee and a Roman Catholic Church delegation.

Lee set today as the deadline for Davies to indicate compliance with his demands or settle the issue in court.

Davies said in a telephone

interview that the Review had experienced many forms of banning or censorship by other governments, "but he called Singapore's method of restricting circulation 'invidious.'

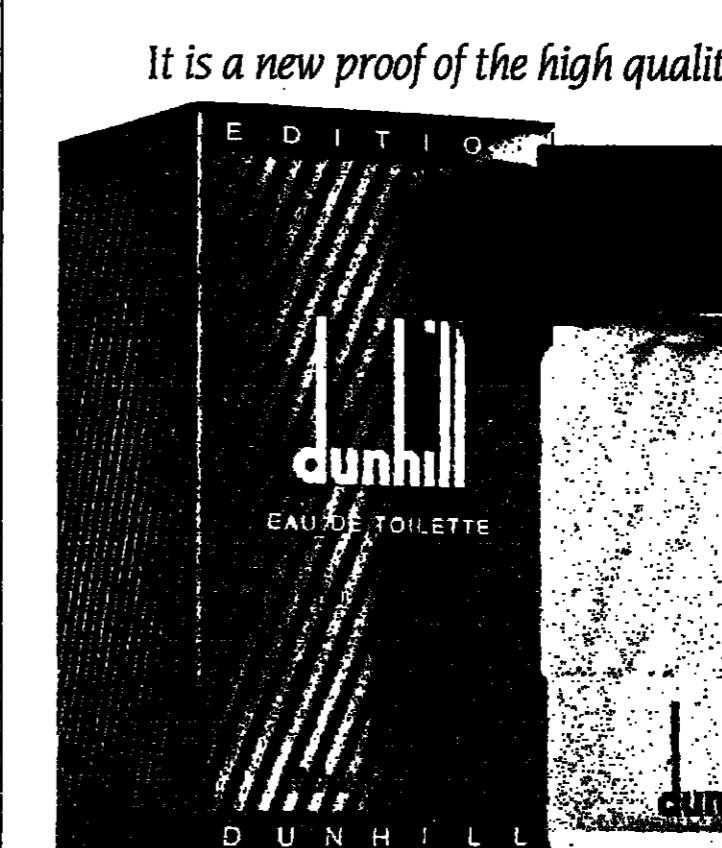
The government announced Saturday that it was slashing the circulation of the review from 9,000 to 500 copies a week, the fourth publication in 14 months to have its circulation drastically cut over charges of meddling in Singapore's domestic politics.

The ministry said the CCA made the promise in 1974 when it moved its headquarters from Bangkok to Singapore.

The identities of the five executives were not disclosed and telephone calls to the CCA offices went unanswered.

The statement accused the CCA, a regional organisation concerned with promoting Christian unity, of using Singapore as a base to support "liberation movements" in other Asian countries and helping to fund pro-communist movements.

It is a new proof of the high quality of



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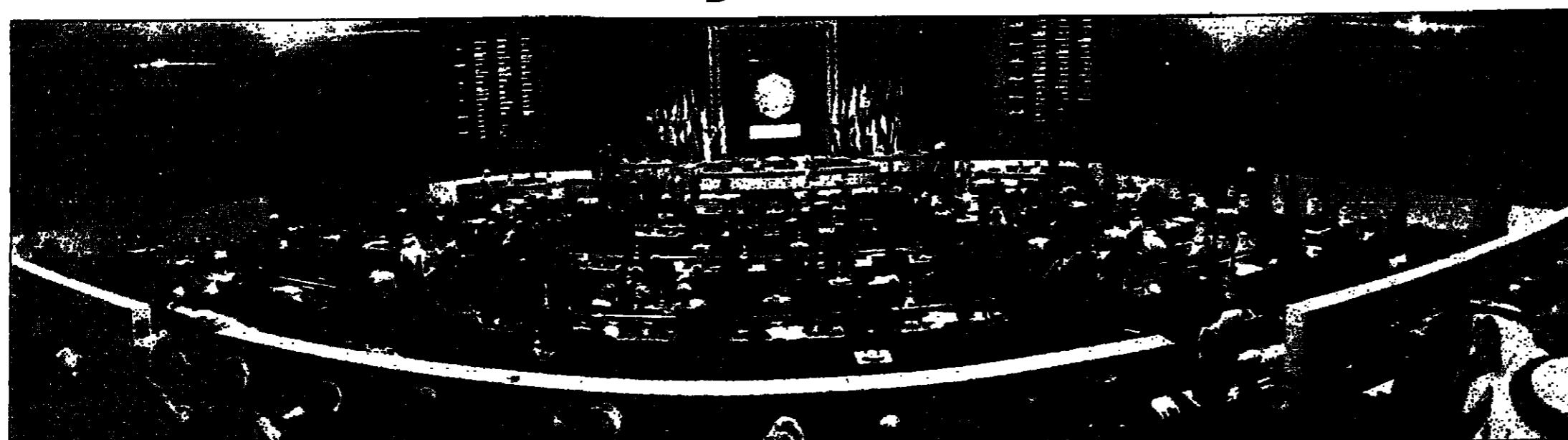


YACOUB & JASIM YUSIFAL HOMAIZI

Tel: 4810477/4810848

Arab Times takes a look back at 1987

A momentous year in the history of Kuwait



A general view of the Islamic summit

THE year 1987 was arguably the most dramatic year in Kuwait's recent history with the country becoming embroiled in the Iran-Iraq war to the extent that its security cannot be safely contemplated unless the end to the conflict is negotiated.

Despite the bloodshed and intensive peace efforts the year ended on a similar note it had begun — with hopes that the following year will see an end to the conflict, which has taken more than a million lives.

Peace was an elusive commodity in 1987. The year began with an Iranian offensive and ended with raging battles on the war front. The tanker war got out of control, with shipping serving Kuwait being among the chief targets of Iranian attacks. There were more foreign navy ships to guard the sealanes in the Gulf than ever before. But more commercial vessels were assailed than in any of the previous years since the tanker war began in 1984.

Although Kuwait's ships and territory were the targets of Iran's missile attacks, and several explosions and fires sent disturbing signals to the authorities, the year was more significant for the tension these incidents caused than for the actual loss of life and material damage.

Throughout the year Kuwait was walking a tightrope performing its balancing act in an effort to ward off the attacks from outside and to maintain peace and stability inside the country.

Sheltered

It was a year that required stamina and pluck from Kuwait's leaders, a year of vigilance, trial and frustration as well as a renewed conviction that



HH the Crown Prince and Premier, Sheikh Saad.

countries also paid off, and these countries heeded Kuwait's appeals and warnings.

Egypt and the US assured Kuwait that it will not face the enemy alone in the unlikely event of an Iranian invasion.

Richard Armitage, the US Assistant Secretary of Defence told Kuwaitis last September: "I don't think anyone in the West would allow any of the GCC states to come under Iranian domination. In fact US and other forces are here (in the Gulf) to stop Iran's hegemony in the region."

A way for a more tangible support from Egypt was cleared when Kuwait resumed diplomatic relations with that North African Arab state.

While its defence forces stepped up their vigilance and vowed to repulse any attacks, Kuwait focused its efforts on achieving peace. In January it played host to the Islamic summit conference which brought together 43 of the 46 member countries of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

Iran did not attend the conference missing a good opportunity for an honourable solution to its conflict with Iraq. The conference urged the belligerents to withdraw to the international borders and embark on the exchange of prisoners of war but saw no point in sending a delegation to Iran.

Role

Throughout the year Kuwait played a significant role in promoting peace efforts within the OIC, the GCC and the Arab league.

At the same time it contemplated new measures to protect its shipping, which suffered frequent attacks blamed on Iran, and insure free flow of its oil exports from the Gulf. Its decision to re-register its tankers in foreign countries, namely the five permanent members of the security council, that these countries were to dispatch fleets to the Gulf to escort vessels registered in their countries.

Kuwait first chartered three Soviet vessels in May. Then in July and August, 11 Kuwaiti tankers were re-registered in the US. Three other Kuwaiti vessels were registered in UK.

Steps to re-register the tankers followed a series of threats against Kuwait unleashed by Iran, the discovery of mines in Kuwaiti waters and repeated attacks on its shipping.

Kuwait denounced Iran and protested against its hostile acts at the United Nations.

Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed said moves to register oil tankers in the US and charter Soviet tankers reflected the country's desire to safeguard its main source of income. The agreements were commercial in nature, he said, denying that Kuwait sought to bring the superpowers to the Gulf. But he repeatedly stressed that the protection of ships in the international waters was the responsibility of the international community.

Kuwait ruled out any possibility of granting military facilities to the United States or other foreign powers.

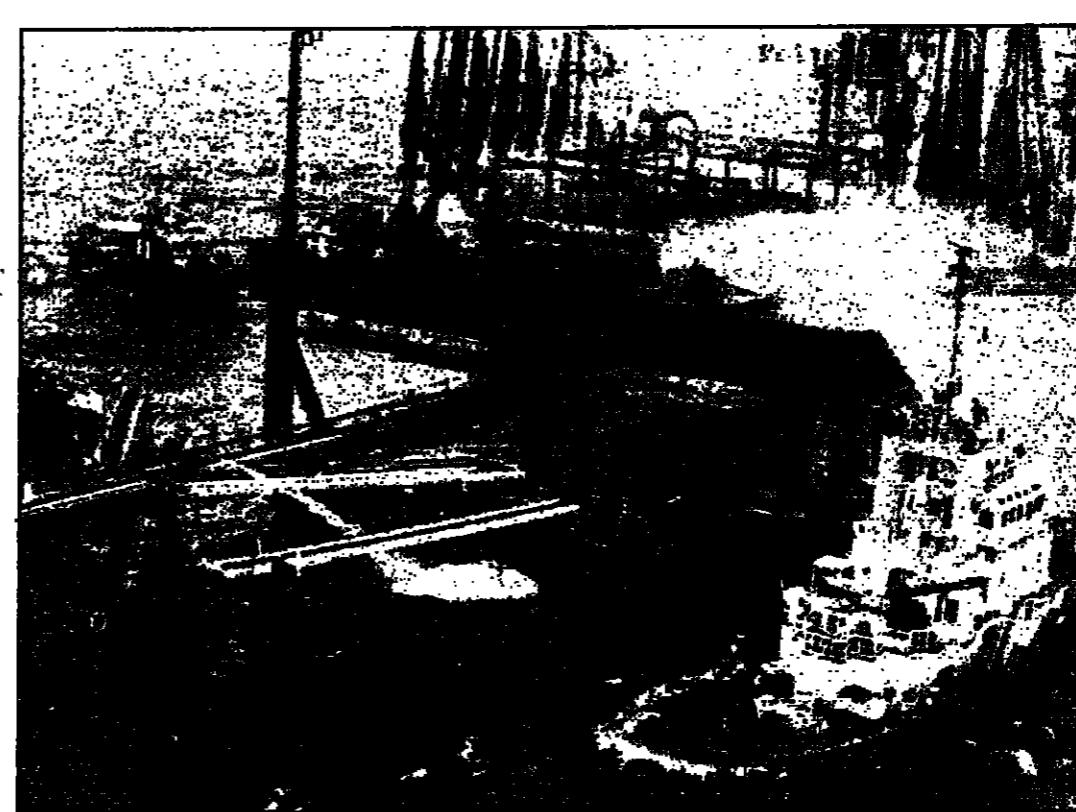
Escort

Kuwaiti tankers were re-registered in the US a day after the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq war. The US dispatched a fleet of more than 30 ships to escort the American-flag vessels in the Gulf. The US Navy have escorted more than 20 convoys which started unhappily when the US-flag tanker Bridgeton was holed by a mine on its maiden voyage to Kuwait.

The Iranian-sown mines alarmed the international community and France, Belgium, Italy and Holland sent fleets complete with minesweepers to the Gulf while Britain strengthened its Armilla Patrol. Their role was to



Fireboats extinguishing the fire at the oil loading terminal after it was hit by an Iranian missile.



Bayan Police station earlier this year.

In June six people were given death penalty by Kuwait's State Security Court for sabotaging vital oil installations and plotting to undermine the government. They were among 16 people on trial since April 4, 1987. Four of the 16, including two sentenced to death, are still at large.

The defendants were charged with sabotage at key oil sites in June last year and in January 1987. Other charges were plotting to undermine Kuwait's territorial integrity and social economic fabric.

An indictment at the trial's opening said they had acted "against Kuwait's unity and territorial integrity" from August 1984 to February 1987.



HH the Amir chairing the Islamic summit

in Kuwait's stand on Arab or international issues.

On June 9, 1987, eight people, including seven Kuwaitis, were charged for allegedly inciting violence and distributing subversive material — leaflets inciting the overthrow of the Kuwaiti political system by violent and unlawful means. The leaflets slandered HH the Amir according to a prosecutor. Those charged were between the ages of 14 and 25.

On June 15, 1987, the trial of 26 rioters began. Of the total 25 were Kuwaitis. They were tried on charges of rioting, violently resisting security forces and disturbing order. The defendants between the ages of 17 to 37 "gathered in public places with an intent to resist authorities and disturb peace and order," a charge sheet made in January said.

On June 27, the State Security Court began the trial of 15 Kuwaitis on security charges. Seven defendants including three minors (one minor still at large) were accused of "inciting the overthrow of the country's regime by unlawful and violent means."

Eight other Kuwaitis, aged 20 to 37, went on trial for obstructing the course of justice and attacking security men in a riot in January this year, during which a policeman was injured.

On July 1, 1987, Kuwaitis and a foreigner were sentenced to jail terms ranging from six months to seven years from anti-state activities.

Six Kuwaitis convicted of seeking to topple the government by force and distributing anti-state leaflets received the stiffest sentences of up to seven years with hard labour.

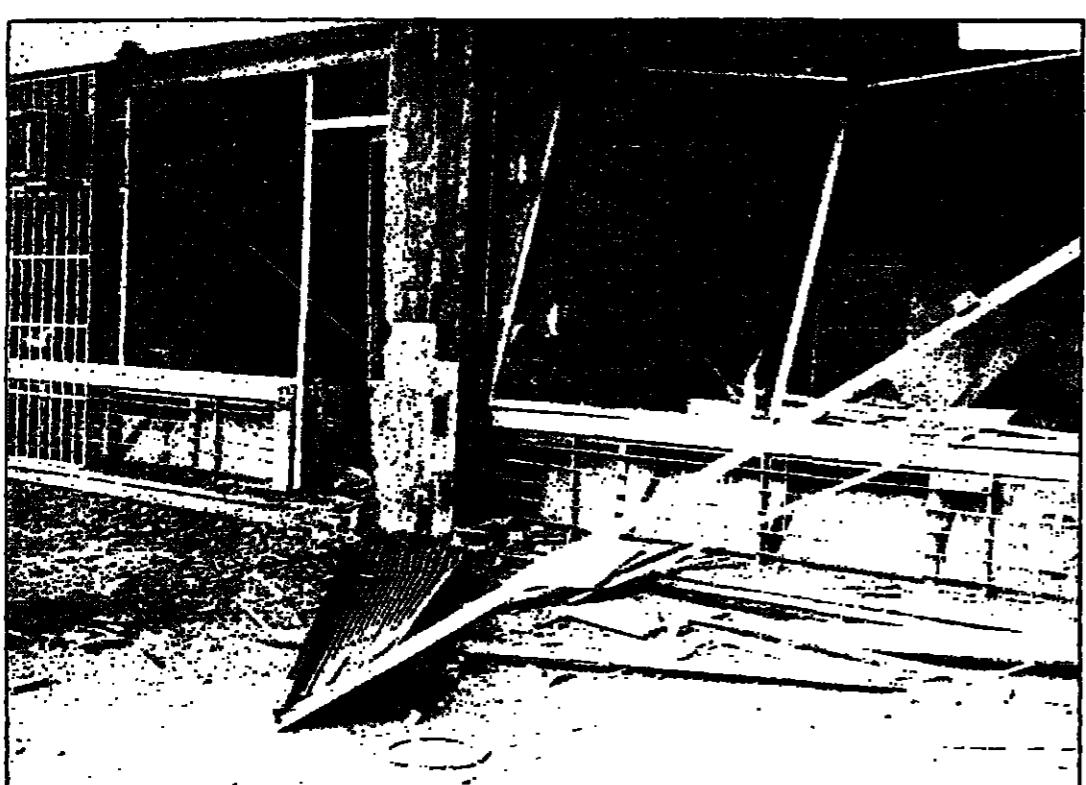
Law

The authorities also moved to close the loopholes in the immigration and residence laws. In April new amendments to the residence law were announced spelling strict punishment for those who traded in visas and residence permits.

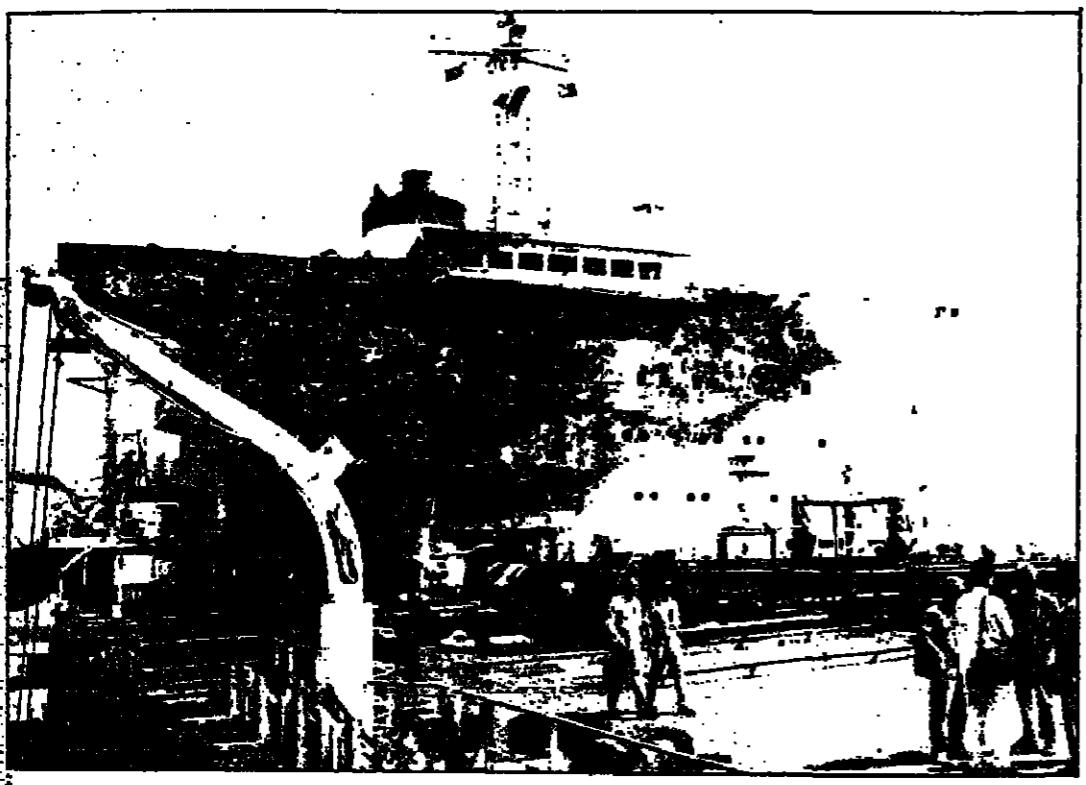
In September the immigration department announced that expatriates staying in Kuwait illegally would be granted a three-month grace period allowing them to leave the country and normalise their residence formalities. This was extended later to the end of January, 1988. The new measures also specified that expatriates who remain outside Kuwait for more than six months would automatically lose their residence even if they are ignorant of the law which came into force on July 5.

The New Year may not bring quick solutions to the Gulf problems.

Kuwait has done a lot to alert the world to the perils of prolonged hostilities in the region. It now counts on the international community to take decisive steps to put an end to the war which flared up in 1980 to make it one of the years many would be happy to forget.



A view of the damaged Pan American airlines office after an explosion.



The Sea Isle City after missile attack.



The US-flag Bridgeton which was holed by a mine in the Gulf.

Arab Times

Austrian minister offers to mediate to halt Gulf war

THE visiting Austrian Minister of Interior Karl Blecha yesterday expressed Austria's readiness to contribute in mediation to halt the war between Iraq and Iran.

Blecha told Kuwait news agency in an interview that Austria, as a neutral country, is always ready to play a role to end the Iraq and Iran conflict, stressing that Vienna supports the United Nations' Security Council resolution 598 ordering an end to the Gulf war.

"This war cannot be halted, but by a peaceful solution to be accepted by the warring parties," he said, adding that Austria supports an arms embargo against the party that continues the war.

Denied

Press reports had reported that Iran had acquired 140 Austrian-made artillery pieces through an Arab state.

The minister denied that his visit to Kuwait was aimed at signing an arms deal, noting it is to exchange expertise and information in the police and security fields.

"The Kuwaiti police does not

need large quantities of arms," the minister said, noting that his visit came in response to an invitation from his Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Nasser Al Ahmed.

Blecha concludes a five-day visit here and leaves for Dubai in the United Arab Emirates on a private visit.

Role

On Arab-Austrian relations, Blecha said former Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kriesky had played a distinguished role in enhancing these relations and had various positive stances toward the Arab issues in general and the Palestinian question in particular.

Speaking on the state of relations under current Austrian President Dr Kurt Waldheim, Blecha said the Arab-Austrian ties are healthy, adding, Waldheim since he was UN Secretary-General had been keen on

cementing such links.

On international organised terrorism, Blecha said such terrorism cannot be combated unilaterally but through collect-

tive cooperation and coordination between states, stressing that his country cooperates with the Arab states to combat terrorism.

Tour

Meanwhile, Blecha and his accompanying delegation yesterday visited the special forces camp.

The minister was briefed on the special forces activities by assistant general director of the public administration for security installations Colonel Nasser Al Othman and director of the special forces Colonel Bader Al Marzouk.

They viewed a live exercise of dispersing acts of rioting and mock operation of aborting an attack on a motorcade.

They also exchanged token gifts on this occasion.

Later in the day, the Austrian Interior Minister visited "Saud House" in Kuwait City, where he was acquainted with bedouin wool weaving.

Blecha expressed admiration at the traditional Kuwaiti hand-weaving.



Sheikh Saad with the delegation.



Palestinian women singing patriotic songs. (Picture by Ahmad Al Borki)

Palestinian women hold sit-in

A SIT-IN was held at the PLO Women's Union Headquarters in Jabiya yesterday to express solidarity with the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories. The sit-in observed a two-hour silence to commemorate those who have been killed in the uprising and afterwards patriotic songs were sung and slogans chanted.

Sheikh Al Dabbagh, head of the Women's Union, said that many telexes and messages were sent to organisations like the United Nations, the Organisation of Islamic Conference and

other international bodies which support the PLO's stand against Israeli oppression. She said that the main purpose of the sit-in was to let the people in the occupied territories know that "we are supporting them in their struggle."

She explained that even the Arabs of Al Jaleel who were given Israeli citizenship in 1948 have condemned the Israeli brutality and expressed their solidarity with the Palestinians.

Al Dabbagh said that thousands of dinars had been received in donations and that

this money would be sent to the victims of the uprising, and their families through various confidential channels.

She commented that the uprising is the real beginning of the Palestinian renaissance inside the occupied territories and if continued it would inevitably lead to the restoration of Palestinian rights.

The Palestinian community in Kuwait has responded enthusiastically to the uprising and the people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are fully aware of this support, she added.

Britain welcomes summit outcome

LONDON, Dec 30 (Kuna): British officials today welcomed the positive outcome of the GCC summit in Riyadh, describing the meeting as successful.

They pointed out that Britain has always wished the Gulf Cooperation Council well and supported its objective in establishing cohesion and political unity among the six GCC nations.

The officials especially emphasised the importance of the resolutions adopted by the GCC and calling for an early end to the Iran-Iraq war.

The council's attempt to remind the world of the UN resolution 598 also coincided with the renewed international resolve demonstrated now to bring the Gulf conflict to a speedy and peaceful conclusion, they added.

Meanwhile, Britain is expected to concentrate its efforts, after assuming the Security Council presidency at the beginning of January, on working on a mandatory UN resolution, including an arms embargo against Iran.

The paper condemned Iran for not showing the necessary flexibility to accept a UN ceasefire demand.

British officials were now confidently optimistic that the Soviet Union would support enforcement measures including the arms embargo against Iran.

In a related move, the Foreign Office expects to receive information in the near future about a forthcoming visit to Britain by a GCC delegation as part of an effort designed to convince the five permanent members of the Security Council to implement a ceasefire in the Gulf.

However, a spokesman for the department could not specify today who will lead the GCC

Kisr focusing on developing food resources

DR Homoud Rqobah, the Director of Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (Kisr), said that the research done at Kisr focused on developing food and water resources, the oil and petrochemical sector and the environmental and industrial production studies. He added that the most important achievement of the institute for 1987 was getting three patents for agricultural and chemical inventions.

Al Rqobah said that Kisr had completed a programme of producing 40 tons of subaiti fish at its pool this year and had offered these fish for sale on the local market. He added that Kisr had also submitted a plan to the Public Authority for Agriculture and Fish Resources to develop Kuwait's fish resources during the coming 20 years.

The director said that Kisr will carry out several projects in 1988 which include studies on ways to develop hamour fish production and the effect of food and climate on poultry.

No decision yet on AIDS treatment centre

YOUSSEF Al Ateeqi, the Assistant Undersecretary for Public Services of Kuwait's Health Ministry, said that the ministry had not yet reached a decision about whether to establish an AIDS treatment centre in Kuwait. He added that the question is still being studied and that no budget has been allocated for such a project at this time, but if the centre is approved it will be for treatment of all contagious diseases, not just for AIDS.

Al Ateeqi said that a hospital will be built in the Mishref area to serve people in that area and some of the people in Adan Health area.

Lebanon's mufti calls for dialogue

LEBANON'S Mufti Hassan Khaled was quoted yesterday as denouncing confessionalism and urging his warring countrymen to initiate dialogue between them to end Lebanon's 12-year-old civil war.

Khaled, in an interview published in a Kuwaiti newspaper stressed however that all Lebanese sects should and can live together in peace without prejudices and violence "because none wishes to eliminate the existence of others."

Khaled put much of the blame of Lebanon's plight on local militias which he said were blocking a fair settlement that could reunite the country.

If a political agreement continued to elude the Lebanese, Lebanon, according to its Muslim mufti, will be left to face

an integrated plan.

He said that work would soon begin on the Saheed and Faiha Slaughter houses.



Kuwait's Information Minister, Sheikh Nasser Al Ahmed, yesterday met the mufti of Lebanon, Sheikh Hassan Khaled. The meeting was attended by the ministry's Under-secretary, Abdul Aziz Jaffer (right).

Cancer is third top killer

DR Yousef Omar, the Director of Kuwait's Cancer Society, said that cancer is the third highest cause of death in Kuwait and that deaths resulting from road accidents is the second highest cause of death.

Dr Omar, speaking at a seminar about cancer disease at Kuwait Medical Society, said that there are about 36 cases of cancer per 100,000 Kuwaiti males and 35.5 cases of cancer per 100,000 Kuwaiti females. Among non-Kuwaitis there are about 52 cases per 100,000 among males and 55 cases per 100,000 among females. He added that statistics show that lung cancer has increased over the last ten years and liver and colon cancer has increased in the last two years.

Dr Naji Abdul Wahed, the Head of Kuwait Medical Society's Scientific Committee, said that smoking is the real enemy and encouraged physicians to set an example for patients by not smoking. He added that the most common kind of cancer among women is breast cancer.

Discount on landing fees

THE Kuwait Civil Aviation has decided to give between 30-40 per cent discount to some international airways on landing fees and services.

A responsible source in the aviation higher council told Kuna that the discount is offered to the airways which use Kuwait International Airport but whose airports are not frequented by Kuwait Airways.

American musicians on goodwill tour

A GROUP of American musicians on an "Indiana University Goodwill Tour" will give a one-day concert of opera music next week.

Modernisation of telephone network

A RESPONSIBLE source at Kuwait's Communications Ministry said that the ministry had completed the fourth stage of their modernisation project and had offered tenders for telephone networks in the Ardhiya, Abu Halifa and Jileel Al Shiyoukh areas.

The project began in December 1986 and is expected to be completed in two years. The source added that a tender had also been offered to extend the telephone networks in the Salwa and Fintas areas.

They will tour Pakistan, Bahrain, UAE and other countries in Asia and the Gulf.

The concert in Kuwait will be

held on Monday, Jan 4, at 7.30pm, in the auditorium of the Special Institutes, Cairo Street, Hawalli. Admission is free. Adults and children over 15 years of age are welcome.

The group of 10 professors and post-graduate students have been invited by the Ministry of Information. They will present La Boheme by Puccini, La Traviata by Verdi, Pearl Fishers by Bizet, Tosca by Puccini, Rigoletto by Verdi and Daughter of the Regiment and Lucia Di Lammermoor by Donizetti.

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ARAB TIMES

Thought for today

ALWAYS remember that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other one thing — Abraham Lincoln, US President (1809-1865).

Prospect of Mideast peace pushed back

By Howard Goller

TEL AVIV (Reuters): December unrest in occupied Arab territories, during which Israeli troops have killed at least 22 Palestinian demonstrators, has polarised opinions on both sides and appears to have put back prospects for a Middle East peace settlement.

Israeli leaders and scholars said peace efforts were the biggest loser and neither side would draw lessons from 15 days of riots which spread from the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank captured in the 1967 Middle East war to Arab towns inside the Jewish state itself.

Meron Benvenisti, an Israeli researcher who for many years has published an annual survey of West Bank statistics, said: "Of course there are lessons, but what happens usually is that people draw the same conclusions they arrived at before."

Notions

The unrest seemed only to bolster each side's preconceived notions.

The main concerns of many Israelis were restoring order and mitigating the damage done to their international image by the killing of Palestinian demonstrators. Washington, Israel's closest ally, accused Israeli troops of using excessive force.

Israel's immediate reaction was to arrest more than 1,000 Palestinians and put hundreds on trial while launching a campaign to counter newspaper and television images abroad of soldiers clashing with Palestinian demonstrators.

The question of finding a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli problem ranked third in priorities.

Poll

"We will not change our position, our attitude, under pressure from what has happened the last two weeks in the territories," Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's spokesman, Yossi Ahimeir, said.

Such a hard line might be expected from Shamir, whose rightist Likud bloc opposes trading captured land for peace with neighbouring Jordan — but not from Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, the Labour Party leader.

Peres, like Arab leaders, favours an international framework to negotiate a Middle East peace settlement. But mindful of Israeli public opinion, both he and Labour Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin avoided confronting Shamir over the unrest.

In separate interviews on US television, both said the unrest did not help peace efforts.

A recent poll in the Israeli newspaper *Yedioth Achronot* showed 69 per cent of Israelis wanted a tougher stance in the occupied areas, 23 per cent

Potential sources of nuclear proliferation

By Peter N. Spotts

BOSTON: When Brazil or India announces that it has launched space or atmospheric experiments using home-grown rockets, it's often seen as a sign of progress.

But others look at those same rockets and quickly point out that a vehicle that can launch a 1,000-pound satellite can also send conventional, chemical or nuclear weapons hurtling toward a longstanding enemy.

As a national-security concern, "ballistic missile proliferation is right up there with nuclear proliferation," says Andrew Goldberg, a national-security studies fellow at the Georgetown Centre for Strategic and International Studies. "Ballistic missile proliferation will be one of the key areas of technical tension in the 1990s."

Not surprisingly, the initial nuts and bolts of missile technology, as well as the know-how to implement it, have come largely from the US and the Soviet Union, according to the Congressional Research Service (CRS), which has produced two reports in the last 20 months on the topic.

Both superpowers have sold short-range military missiles to some of their client states, especially in the Middle East, according to the CRS. The missiles have ranges from about 100 to 500 miles, depending on the type, and varying degrees of

backed existing policy and seven per cent supported a softer approach.

Another survey showed Israelis as divided as their government over whether to exchange land for peace.

Warning

The "Peace Now" group, which drew 400,000 Israelis to a famous rally against Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, demanded an end to the 20-year occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. But it attracted only 4,000 demonstrators to two rallies.

Even Amram Mitzna, the Israeli Army's central commander, warned the military could not provide a complete and decisive solution to the political problems of the occupied areas. But some Israelis say that not only their own people failed to draw lessons from the unrest.

"I think the same is true on the other side," Benvenisti, a former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, said.

There is an euphoric feeling among Palestinians. This will go down in history as a rebellion, and it will become a myth. And this myth is not going to help them conceive new and positive policies," he said.

Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), described the unrest as "an uprising" and restated his commitment to a settlement to be negotiated at a United Nations-sponsored peace conference.

In occupied Jerusalem, Palestinian publications and spokesmen said the lessons were primarily for Israelis to draw.

Struggling

"I think any Israeli should awaken from his dream nowadays and realise that there are two peoples in Palestine — the Palestinian people and the Jewish people," said Mahdi Abdul-Hadi, president of the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (Pasa).

The uprising began on Dec. 4 after four Gazans were killed when an Israeli Army truck collided with their vehicles. The Army denied widespread rumours that the truck driver staged the crash to avenge the death of an Israeli who had been killed in Gaza.

Both sides believe they are struggling for survival.

Nearly 40 years after the creation of Israel, Shamir was still telling a nationwide television audience: "We want to fight for our lives."

Most alarming for many Israelis was a "peace day" strike observed by the 560,000 Arab citizens of Israel in sympathy with the 1.5 million Arabs of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Violence erupted in Jaffna, a mixed Arab-Jewish area next to Tel Aviv.

Irregularities at the Indian School

SIR: I would like to thank you, on behalf of all expatriates, for exposing innumerable malpractices — such as unscrupulous recruiting agents who are exploiting Asians.

The primary job of these so-called agents is to trap innocent men and women by making false promises. Stealthily, they are robbed of everything. Even teachers and principals have become the victims of such recruiting agencies. Two agents conduct their business under the banner of a private school — the head of the institution has become the cat's paw. Such social parasites must be exposed to the public.

We thank you for the bold report on Appukuttan's dilemma in your newspaper. If that report had not been published, Appukuttan would have been packed off to India.

A number of irregularities has been committed by the Indian School board. Before taking a decision they should analyse their activities. Is there

anyone who does not indulge in money-making? Why are the director's sitting tight in their chairs? Why are teachers victimised?

At the start, the Indian School was conceived as a community institution. Indians begged and borrowed to set up the school. Now the school has become a feudal property. Outgoing board members name their successors, who are invariably sons, sons-in-law or other relatives.

A board member is well-known for his bureaucratic past in India. This man works hard — yet the school is in the red and has a deficit. Why?

The benevolent sponsor of the school does not take any profit? Where does the income go?

Why doesn't the school have its own building? Men who worked for this institution have been conveniently obliterated.

The present management indicts teachers, accusing them

of being envious. What about motivating them by giving increments?

I suggest that the school board be placed under the Indian ambassador, rather than retain it as a feudal property of some members.

I hope this will be done for the benefit of thousands of Indians in Kuwait.

A parent (Name and Address supplied)

Reduction in mail

SIR: Regrettably, KTV2 did not report the death of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran on Thursday, Dec 24. MGR was a statesman and a politician and regarded highly by most Indians, who were disappointed when KTV neglected this particular news item.

However, we were very surprised when MGR's death was reported on the 10 o'clock News on KTV1. If the news was worth showing on an Arabic channel, why wasn't it worth including in the English broadcast? I don't understand how the English channel missed the news item when the Arabic one picked it up.

Most foreigners rely on

KTV2 news broadcasts to get news about world events, particularly from their home country. KTV2 always disappoints the foreigners. It is a pity they don't cater to the English-speaking viewers.

Y.G. Sesha Reddy, Safat

MGR's death a great loss

SIR: I was shocked to learn about Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran's death, which ends a glorious era of Tamil Nadu. MGR was "makkal thilakam" (the darling of masses). He was deeply sympathetic of the problems of the poor; protected and respected women and opposed law-breakers.

MGR, like his predecessor Annadurai, was a prominent social worker and was responsible for the prosperity of Tamil Nadu. Thousands of Tamils worshipped him like a deity.

He was so widely admired and respected that people forgave his mistakes. Millions in India must be mourning the sad demise of the film star-turned politician. India has lost a great patriot.

T. Philip Safat



Enough

SIR: We would like to ask the KTV2 to bring back "Open all Hours" starring Ronnie Barker. I used to look forward to this programme all week and now it has been replaced by yet another wildlife film. I'm ready to take a degree in zoology after watching KTV2. Enough is enough.

G. Haider, Ahmed

ALL letters to the Editor must contain the writer's name and address. Publication is at the discretion of the Editor and letters are subject to the editing process for space or other reasons.

The majority of children do not have access to milk any more. There are children who are getting one meal a day, of bread sprinkled with thyme.

Lebanese face bitter fight for survival

By Jim Muir

BEIRUT: Lebanese, who have lived through the bombs and bullets that have claimed scores of thousands of lives, now face a bitter fight for survival against a crushing economic collapse.

The drastic decline of the national currency, skyrocketing inflation, and a breakdown of many public services make meeting life's basic needs a major preoccupation for almost all social classes.

"The majority of Lebanese children do not have access to milk any more, and the quality of the food they are getting has dropped badly," says Marwan Sidani, acting director of the Lebanon programme, for the British branch of Save the Children Fund. "We know of 100,000 families, with some 200,000 to 300,000 children under six, in dire need of help. They have had to cut such staples as oil, grains, sugar, and milk, and they live off bread, which is subsidised. Even that takes up 70 per cent of their income."

"It is not starvation yet, but it is threatening. I can show you children who are getting only one meal a day, of bread sprinkled with thyme," Sidani says.

Destroyed

The main pillars of the once-booming Lebanese economy — notably tourism, banking, and services — were either destroyed or badly damaged by successive rounds of civil strife since 1975.

After holding firm against the United States dollar for the first 10 years of crisis, the Lebanese pound first showed signs of weakening in the summer of 1985. Economists and bankers warned that a major economic crisis was inevitable unless a political settlement brought to an end.

But there has been no political solution. The economic crunch has arrived with a vengeance. It represents the cumulative result of all the years of destruction, the progressive erosion of the country's social and economic fabric, and general despair over the prospects for a political settlement," says economic consultant Riad Khouri.

After a steady decline since last year, the Lebanese pound (L) nosedived in recent months to its current level of around 500 to the dollar, with no floor in sight.

The Iran-Contra affair came to a head Nov 18 when the House and Senate investigatory committee issued their report on the congressional report said Reagan set a tone of leadership that led aides to believe they could skirt the law.

The report said this atmosphere spawned a "cabal of zealots" in the White House who displayed a "disdain for the law."

The one big plus of the year was the summit, a three-day extravaganza of meetings with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev that riveted world attention.

It produced the signing of a treaty to eliminate intermediate-range nuclear missiles, and held out the hope of achieving another agreement, to cut long-range strategic weapons by about 50 per cent.

Reagan is supposed to visit Moscow for another summit before June, and a treaty or the outline of one — might be ready for signing then. Even without an arms agreement, both sides are planning for another summit.

Bankers say there is a great deal of private wealth that would re-enter the economy as soon as political settlement was reached, and few economists doubt that there would be something of a boom. But the chances of a settlement being reached between estranged Christians and Muslim leaders appear as remote as ever.

The general prediction is that the country faces its longest and darkest winter yet.

Prices of everything from clothes to cement — all but the most basic commodities — are now set in dollars and translated into Lebanese pounds at the prevailing daily rate. For those with incomes in the local currency, this has carried prices into the realm of fantasy.

It is like an American waking up to find that a soft drink costs \$100, a pair of shoes \$2,000. The price of a restaurant meal for four would have bought a limousine a few years ago.

"Life became totally impossible," says Abdulla Qesim, one of many breadwinners who, having stuck it out through all the upheavals, are now forced to seek work abroad and send cash home to their families. "My last job working for a Muslim charity was paying L (str) 9,000 a month — about \$18. With three teenage children in school, how could we begin to live on that?"

Lifeline

Hard-currency remittances from relatives abroad have become a lifeline for thousands of Lebanese families. A few hundred dollars sent from outside may have to spread across an increasingly large family network, as needy relatives turn to kin for help.

Community-based charities among both Muslims and Christians have taken on an increasingly important role in helping those most in need. Outside aid organisations are working hard to keep starvation at bay, too.

The Lebanese state system, paralysed, fragmented, and almost bankrupt, is unable to help.

Signs of the hard times are apparent on Hamra Street, Beirut's equivalent of Fifth Avenue in prosperous pre-war days. Every morning, the sidewalks are jammed with people buying and selling dollars.

"Everybody changes their

salaries into dollars at the beginning of the month, and their fortunes rise and fall with the dollar," says a Beirut banker. A half-dozen local radio stations give hourly updates of exchange rates.

On a side street, a Sunday morning flea market has sprung up, offering a bizarre and depressing assortment of used and stolen articles, ranging from a grandfather clock down to small pieces of old electrical wire and hose pipe and other worthless items, some of them scavenged off street-corner garbage heaps.

"The people who go through the garbage are not finding much nowadays," says one West Beirut resident. "Very little that might be worth anything at all is being thrown away now, and what there is gets picked out straight away."

Worries

In addition to the economic squeeze, the difficulties of life in Beirut are aggravated by frequent shortages of basic commodities and essential services.

Lengthy and unpredictable power blackouts occur almost every day. Making a few local phone calls can be a frustrating day's work, and calls between East and West Beirut are virtually impossible.

"We Lebanese are worrying all day long about gasoline, about bread, about electricity, about medicines ... we don't have time to think about anything else," says Muhammed Abboud, a carpenter.

Because gasoline, bread, and bottled water for cooking are subsidised, supplies disappear onto the black market or are smuggled abroad. Members of the warring sectarian militias are widely accused of leading the racketeering.

Only after the government recently raised the official price of gasoline to L (str) 11,400 for 20 litres (it was L (str) 1,117 a few years ago) did supplies begin to reappear at gas stations ... albeit with a militia percentage hacked on. The militia factions, some merchants and people on dollar salaries survived and even prospered.

"The government has been subsidising the militias, and is being bankrupted by them," says one militia official.

The Christian Science Monitor

TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1494 — Forces of France's King Charles VIII enter Rome.
- 1810 — Russia's Tsar Alexander introduces new tariff aimed at French goods.
- 1851 — Austrian constitution is abolished.
- 1879 — US inventor Thomas A. Edison gives first demonstration of his electric incandescent light at Menlo Park, New Jersey.
- 1919 — Britain, Japan and United States sign agreement on East Siberia.
- 1946 — End of World War II is proclaimed officially by US President Harry S. Truman.
- 1956 — President Sukarno proclaims state of siege in Sumatra, Indonesia.
- 1961 — Lebanon's Army prevents coup attempt in Beirut by Syrian Popular Party.
- 1963 — Central African federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland is dissolved.
- 1964 — Indonesia's President Sukarno threatens to quit United Nations if Malaysia is given seat on Security Council.
- 1966 — United States says it will halt bombing of North Vietnam when Hanoi assures that it will discuss peace terms seriously.
- 1968 — UN Security Council censures Israel unanimously for helicopter commando raid on airport at Beirut, Lebanon.
- 1973 — Cuba's Premier F

EVENTS

WHAT'S ON

SOCIAL

Vienna Boys Choir
VIENNA Boys Choir will give one performance at 8.00 pm on Jan 5 (Tuesday) in the Grand Ballroom at Kuwait Hilton Hotel. They will play a 40-minute piece by Johann Strauß - Tales from the Vienna Woods. They will also present excerpts from compositions by Franz Schubert, Peter Eben, Henry Purcell der Viandana and Benjamin Britten.

ASK Alumni Dinner

Friends and graduates of the American School, Kuwait, will hold an alumni dinner at Regency Palace Hotel on Jan 3. The Arabic buffet will begin at 8 pm. For details phone Mrs Suzy Jones - 5314568.

Tareq Rajab Museum

The museum has been closed for renovation. It reopens at the end of January and will display manuscripts, ceramics and textiles.

German-Speaking Cultural Association

The next meeting for German speaking women will be held in the New Year — on Sunday, Jan 3, 10 am, at the Kuwait Hilton Hotel. All German speakers are welcome.

Concert

American vocalists will give a concert on Jan 4 at 7.30 pm in the auditorium of the Special Private Institute (Cairo St., Hawalli).

HOTELS

At the Ramada Al Salam
Special children's brunch parties will be held every Friday, beginning this week, in El Bendar. Lots of fun and games will be provided from 12 noon to 3 pm.

At the Hilton
Ring in the New Year in style at the Faikha Restaurant, featuring dinner on Thursday night; dine to music by the Magnetic Band. Faikha Restaurant will be open on New Year's Day for lunch and dinner.

La Palma, open from 6.30 am till midnight, features a special lunch and dinner buffet on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

At the Holiday Inn
Pastries, stollen and logs for the festive season and New Year's available at the Lobby Lounge. Lunch and dinner seasonal food will be offered at the Coffee Shop, Al Dana and Al Andalus. For details contact the hotel.

At the Sheraton
Al Hamra features a special buffet dinner on Thursday night and a special lunch buffet on Friday, New Year's Day. Hunt Room offers special dinner buffet on Thursday night; music by the Paradise Trio. Riccardo features an a la carte menu and Le Tambouche will feature special lunch and dinner buffets on Thursday and Friday.

At the Meridien
Special lunch and dinner menu will be offered this week at all the outlets — Versailles, La Brasserie and at Remy and Tony's Jam session enjoy toe-tapping music on Thursday. Family fun on Friday in La Brasserie features a special menu, video cartoons, water games, magician and other attractions for all the family.

At Messilah Beach
Special New Year's Eve Dinner and New Year Lunch in Al Mubarakah; buffet featuring seasonal food.

Children's parties will be held every Friday in Al Jawharah in cooperation with Kids 'R' Us from 4 to 7 pm. Join the fun with the band, clown, games. Many prizes to be won, plus a gift for every child.

At the SAS
Festive items are available at the gourmet shop.

SPORTS

Kuwait Nomads

Rugby Club

England vs Scotland at Fintas Park on Friday. Kickoff: 3 pm. All players must report by 2.45 pm.

Events welcomes items for its What's On column. They can be telexed or phoned to 4813566, Ext 285 between 1000 and 1800 hours daily, except Thursdays. Pictures will also be considered for publication. The sooner the item is submitted, the better its chance for publication.

PRAYERS

Fajr 5.15 am
Zahr 11.48
Aar 2.38 pm
Maghreb 4.58
Isha 6.20

Friday 5.17 am
Friday prayer 11.50
Aar 2.41 am
Maghreb 5.00
Isha 6.22

Eating in casual surroundings

THE Maharaja is one of the older established restaurants in Kuwait, situated on the first floor of the Phoenicia Hotel on the corner of Fahd Al Salem Street which leads towards the KAC building. The decor is quite basic with wood-paneled walls, simple furniture, crisp, clean table-linen, a few neglected pot plants and some batik paintings. Indian restaurants tend to be dimly lit and at the Maharaja blue light-bulbs cast a rather ghoulish ultra-violet haze over the gloom. Cheerful pop music plays gently in the background while an antique T.V. set flickers in the corner. The Maharaja is a quiet place to enjoy an unhurried meal in casual surroundings.

The menu, which is clearly laid out in Arabic and English is a delight to read with its detailed and tempting descriptions of each dish. Although three out of the six appetisers listed were in fact not available, there was a wide choice of tandori-baked food, chicken, mutton and seafood curries from different regions of India as well as biriani, vegetable preparations and breads. There is no beef on the menu. Prices



Table Talk

BY DINAH

average around KD1.750 for the main dishes which are sufficient for two persons. The prawn dishes are the most expensive at KD3.250.

Courteous

After ordering, we had to wait about thirty minutes for the food to arrive, so the Maharaja is not the place to go if you are looking for a quick snack. The service was courteous and unobtrusive and the waiter enquired how heavily spiced we wanted the food. When the meat at last arrived we did feel it had been worth the wait. The Goan fish curry was quite a hot dish with a sauce

rich in desiccated coconut, tomato, coriander and cardamom. The fish itself had a melting texture.

Although we ordered the delicious-sounding Chicken Maharaja Special ("Oven baked chicken simmered in Himalayan Spices, cream, butter and fresh tomatoes"), I rather suspect that the dish we were served was the Chicken Zafraani. Whatever its name, tender strips of chicken had been cooked in a creamy yellow sauce, which provided a soothing contrast to the more fiery fish dishes. The Prawn Tandoori was too salty and heavily spiced with cumin for my taste.

Quiet place to enjoy unhurried meal

The bill came to KD13.053, which we felt was overpriced. A 15 per cent service charge is added to the listed menu prices. If the Maharaja wants to attract more guests (there was only one other table occupied the whole evening we were there), it should do well to make its prices more competitive. The waiter willingly parcelled up our left-overs to take home. The Maharaja also offers a take-away service.

RESTAURANT: The Maharaja

TYPE: Indian restaurant of the Phoenicia Hotel

MEAL: Two course Indian

PRICE: KD13.053 (for two)

Star rating (out of five):

FOOD: ***

SERVICE: ***

ATMOSPHERE: *

VALUE FOR MONEY: **

Food is overpriced

Attractively presented on a bed of lettuce, onions and lemon wedges, the six large Gulf prawns were overpriced at KD3.250. The vegetable dish we ordered was Chana Pindi — a very tasty preparation of chickpeas cooked in spices and fresh coriander. The Kashmari Pilau was misleadingly described on the menu as "cooked with dried fruits and garnished with pineapple slices." In fact it was an insipid concoction of plain rice with only a few pieces of dried fruit salad added to it.

Of the three desserts men-

tioned on the menu, two (Kulfi and Shahi Tukra) were unavailable, so the mixed special ice-cream was our only option. Although we would have preferred an Indian dessert, the mixture of mango, chocolate and strawberry ice-cream with nuts and fruit made a refreshing finale to the meal.

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TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

KTV 1

9.00 Holy Quran
9.15 Cartoons
10.00 English film for children

11.00 Open University

11.30 Al Islam Wal Insan: "Islam and Man," new religious programme, hosted by Dr Abdul Suboor Al Shaihin.

12.00 Ali Al Zaneeq:

featuring Farooq Al Fishawi, Huda Sultan, Abu Bakr Ezzat and Laila Fawzi.

1.00 News Summary

1.20 World News via Satellite

2.00 Liqa Al Khamis: roundup of local events

4.00 Hakim Al Aqzam: cartoons

4.30 News Summary

4.40 Cultural film

5.30 Songs and Music

6.00 Alwan: presented by Rasha Magdi

7.00 News Summary

7.05 Show Jumping

7.30 Rahila: Fi Ajam Majnoon: Arabic serial. Starring: Issad Yunus, Ala Rami, Hassan Mustafa, Hussein Sharbini

8.30 With Islam: hosted by Dr. Khalid Al Madhkhur

Opp. Cooperative Society

Friday

Kuwait

Isilgah Pharmacy

Tukhaim Bldg., Fahad Al Salem St.

Al Omar Pharmacy

Awqaf Complex, Mubarak Al Kabir St.

Hawalli and Nugra

Al Kindi Pharmacy

Nr. Asian Olympic Council Bldg., Jabriya

Salmiya and Rumaihiya

Al Qortuba Pharmacy

Salem Al Mubarak St.

Fahabeel and Ahmad

Al Ahmad Pharmacy

Souk Ahmadi

New Khatan

Al Ahram Pharmacy

Block 2, Sulaiman Saleh Rahaimani

Jahra

Al Noor Pharmacy

Abdul Aziz Nasrullah Bldg., Matafi St.

Farwaniya

Al Yasmin Pharmacy

Jara Commercial Centre, No. 1, Main St.

Jahra

Al Noor Pharmacy

Abdul Aziz Nasrullah Bldg., Matafi St.

45 The World Today

0900 News Desk

0900 Meridian

0700 World News

0900 Twenty-Four Hours: News Summary

30 News On...

45 Seven Seas

0800 World News

0900 Reflections

15 First Recordings of British Symphonies

30 Music Now

0900 World News Review

15 The World Today

30 Financial News followed by Sports Roundup

45 I've Been Together Now for 70 Years

1000 News Summary followed by They Sold A Million

15 Seven Seas

1100 World News

09 News About Britain

15 Talking From...

30 Meridian

1200 Radio Newsred

15 Business Matters

1400 Sports Roundup

1300 World News

0900 Twenty-Four Hours: News Summary

30 John Peel

1400 Outlook, opening with 5-Minute News

45 Nature Notebook

1500 Radio Newsred

15 Feature 1st Operation Chrissie Duff

45 (1st only) Recording of the Week

1600 World News

09 Commentary

15 Science in Action

45 Five Minutes Today

1700 World News

09 A Letter from Northern Ireland

15 Music Now



Irises by Van Gogh: sold for \$53.9 million

BIGGEST, BEST, MOST OF 1987



Bill Cosby: earned \$84 million



Bugatti Royale: auctioned for \$9.86 million

NEW YORK, (AP): Here were some of the superlatives of 1987:

Most expensive painting
"Irises" by Vincent Van Gogh — sold at auction for \$53.9 million in New York.

Most expensive car
1931 Bugatti Royale — auctioned for \$9.86 million in London.

Richest person

Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah, 41, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, \$25 billion, according to Forbes magazine.

Top-grossing US film
"Beverly Hills Cop II" — grossed \$153 million as of Dec 22.

Best-paid entertainer

Bill Cosby of the United States, \$84 million estimated for 1986-87, according to Forbes magazine.



Accord: Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and President Ronald Reagan share a joke at the start of their three-day summit in Washington this month.



Crash: a floor broker bows his head as the Dow Jones plunged on Oct 19, 1987. Wall Street stocks fell 22.6 per cent followed by crashes in other world money markets.

Natural and man-made disasters, air and sea accidents, political

Superpower summit brings hope in a

United States.

The congressional report on the Iran-Contra scandal released in November said Reagan must take responsibility for the sale of US arms to Iran and the diversion of some profits to the Contra

rebels even if he did not know what his aides had done.

"The ultimate responsibility for the events in the Iran-Contra affair must rest with the president," it said.

Reagan's economic headches began early in the new

year, and got steadily worse. In January, the first-ever trillion dollar US budget worried financial markets — already concerned that the United States had become the world's biggest debtor.

Investors were also unsettled because the near halving of the dollar's value since 1985 had not cut the massive US trade deficit.

Finally, in October, they decided it was time to bail out. On "Black Monday," October 19, Wall Street stocks plunged 22.6 per cent. Other markets followed and by the end of the year the dollar had hit record lows against the mark, yen and Swiss francs.

Crash
The crash of 87 was a shock to the system that deeply worried economists and politicians.

Other, global financial problems persisted. Nobody could decide what to do about the 1,000 billion dollar debt crisis.

Brazil, the third world's biggest debtor, decided it was fed up with the old prescriptions of austerity to enable it to keep up its debt payments, and suspended payments to its bankers.

Based on uncertain prospects for timely repayment, bank accountants decided many old loans to the Third World were not worth as much as they had thought.

Some due-dates on debt were postponed again, and economists kept warning that unless a more permanent solution could be found, the debt crisis could still push the world into a recession.

But 1987 was not all economic doom and gloom. In the art world, prices went up and up. In November, Vincent Van Gogh's "Irises" painted in a mental asylum just under a century ago, fetched \$53.9 million, becoming the most expensive painting ever sold at auction. Eight months earlier, his "Sunflowers" had set a world record of \$24.75 million (about \$40 million).

For Kremlin leader Gorbachev, 1987 seemed to be ending on a high note with his visit to Washington and the signing of the INF treaty.

At home, he had won approval from the Communist party's policy-setting central committee for a major restructuring of economic management, a key element of his "perestroika" restructuring programme, starting from January.

During the year he brought other reform-ministers into the party's ruling Politburo, clearly strengthening his own position at the head of the Soviet power structure.

And despite a continuing debate on what the extent of "glasnost" policy of open discussion on public issues should be, the Soviet press became more outspoken on domestic problems and long-banned literary works were published.

But close to the surface at the year-end there was nevertheless a sense of unease among both intellectuals, who had been strong sources of support for the Kremlin leader, and ordinary Soviet citizens.

Muscovites grumbled more openly that despite the



Repression: Armed Israeli soldiers drag a Palestinian youth from his house following violent demonstrations in the Gaza Strip. The youth was later beaten unconscious.

By Philippe Naughton

LONDON, (Reuters): 1987 ended on a note of tragedy with the world's worst ever peacetime shipping disaster. Over 2000 people perished when a tanker collided with a ferry in the Philippines.

However on the political scene, the year ended on a hopeful note as meeting between the two most powerful men in the world and the signing of the first pact to eliminate an entire class of nuclear arms sparked hopes that 1987 could come to mark a turning point in superpower relations.

The December summit between President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev gave an upbeat climax to a year which saw famine again threaten the lives of millions of Africans and in which a stock market crash wiped out an estimated 2,000 billion dollars of paper wealth worldwide.

Reagan and Gorbachev said that in their three-day meeting they strengthened a relationship that would promote dialogue rather than confrontation between their traditionally hostile political systems.

For Reagan, the summit came as a diplomatic triumph after a nightmare of a year that included the Iran-Contra scandal, loss of a Republican majority in the senate from last January, the Wall Street crash, prostate surgery and his wife's breast cancer surgery.

The summit brought no spectacular breakthroughs but produced what it was scheduled to do — the signing of a superpower agreement to abolish medium-range nuclear missiles, and analysts said this was by itself an historic success.

Gulf war arena sucks in superpowers

Stalemate on battlefield, carnage at sea

By Stephen Jukes

BAHRAIN, (Reuters): Stalemate on the battlefield and carnage at sea — 1987 was the year that Iran and Iraq's bloody vendetta finally captured world headlines and sucked the superpowers into the Gulf war arena.

But despite an Armada of Western warships patrolling the Gulf, more seamen died than in any of the war's previous six years and prospects for peace in 1988 appear as slim as ever.

Western diplomats in the Gulf said even a new readiness by Moscow to back an Iranian arms embargo was unlikely to break diplomatic deadlock at the United Nations or halt fighting.

"The only hope for an end to the war seems to be the United Nations ... but the chances are slim and it looks like the fighting will just roll on for another year," said one diplomat.

Another said: "There are fears that superpower politics will get in the way at the UN and peace is secondary."

Moscow made a series of well-received overtures to moderate Arab states in early 1987, but is now viewed with deep suspicion after a warming of relations with Iran in past months.

And there are lingering fears among Gulf states over Washington's long-term commitment to the region. Some fear that the US only agreed to protect Kuwaiti tankers under the stars and stripes in mid-year to keep Soviet influence at bay.

Diplomats see the biggest uncertainty for 1988 in a possible change of Iranian leadership. Spiritual leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, 85, has long been rumoured to be ill.



Iraqi troops raise the victory sign, but the war at sea intensified with attacks on neutral shipping in the Gulf. The Greek tanker Ariadne (inset) has its deck ripped after an Iranian frigate fired on it.

ers, sending daily raiding sorties of mirage jets armed with French-made Exocet missiles.

Twenty-one sailors lost their lives when missiles slammed into the Norwegian-operated tanker Susangird on the treacherous Iranian crude shuttle-run down the Gulf.

Iran's revolutionary guards have attacked neutral shipping with a new ferocity, this month sinking their first ship since the so-called tanker war flared in 1984.

Their hit-and-run tactics fly in the face of Western navies now with some 80 warships, minesweepers and support vessels in the region and diplomats say attacks are

with the United States and Britain — namely the formation of a joint UN naval force to police an embargo.

Washington has made clear it would view with suspicion any move that might reduce its huge presence in the Gulf and allow Moscow to increase its foothold.

A compromise would be a limited UN force to check vessels entering the Gulf for Iranian-bound weapons, but military analysts doubt an embargo would be effective or alter Tehran's refusal to accept a ceasefire before Iraq is branded an aggressor in the war.

"I think we will see more of the same in 1988," said a Western diplomat. "Iran will play for time and every so often the war will spill over."

Kuwait, which triggered closer superpower involvement when it sounded out Moscow on chartering tankers to protect oil exports from Iranian attack, has been at the receiving end.

The bomb blasts have rocked Kuwait this year, the most serious on May 22 when fire at the Al-Ahmadi industrial complex threatened to engulf key oil installations. Local newspapers blamed pro-Iranian Kuwaiti extremists.

Kuwait has also become a firing range for Iran's Chinese-designed Silkworm missiles, one of which slammed into a US flag Kuwaiti tanker "US flag Kuwait" off its shores in October.

Saudi Arabia has also felt Iran's wrath, with attacks against its oil tankers and riots in the holy city of Mecca in late July. The Saudi and Kuwaiti embassies were later stormed in Tehran.

Scientific advances

HERE were some of 1987's key scientific advances:

Superconductivity

Advances that could ultimately revolutionise electric power use emerged from a worldwide race to develop high-temperature superconductors that carry electricity without loss.

Supernova

Astronomers learned much about the composition of stars from the discovery of a huge exploding star closer to earth than any supernova observed since the time of Johannes Kepler, almost four centuries ago.

Clot dissolver

The US food and drug administration approved a genetically engineered clot-dissolving drug that may save the lives of thousands of heart attack victims each year.

Cholesterol

Drugs were found effective at lowering cholesterol levels.

Parkinson's disease

Mexican doctors transplanted adrenal gland cells into the brain of Parkinson's disease victims, producing some signs of improvement.

Genetics

Researchers made progress in understanding the genetic defects related to manic-depressive illness, Alzheimer's disease and Down's syndrome.

Fossil

A fossil discovery in Tanzania's Olduvai gorge showed that a human ancestor still had long, ape-like arms as recently as 1.8 million years ago.



Supernova was noticed by astrophysicists on Feb 23, 1987.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR-ENDER



Danger: A Sri Lankan sailor hits Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in Colombo. The India-Sri Lanka accord has been opposed by the Tamil 'Tiger' rebels against whom the Indian forces are conducting an offensive.

violence and war takes its toll on human lives and suffering

year of tragedy and economic gloom

in October.

Meanwhile national day celebrations in October were marred by riots in Lhasa over Chinese rule of Tibet.

Security forces opened fire on a crowd attacking a police station. The official death toll

was put at six but some Tibetans said as many as 19 people died.

Sri Lanka tried to solve its four-year-old separatist Tamil

insurgency, which has cost more than 8,000 lives, agreeing to allow thousands of Indian troops on its territory.

The agreement, signed in Colombo in July by Sri Lankan president Junius Jayewardene and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, has been opposed by hardline Sinhalese, as well as the powerful Tamil Tiger rebels, against whom the Indian forces are conducting an offensive.

At the United Nations, Iraq has accepted a Security Council demand for a ceasefire but Iran will not consider doing so unless Iraq is first named as the aggressor state.

In the Gulf itself, Iraqi and Iranian raids on shipping reached a peak this year — marked by the entry of US naval forces

to the Gulf — with a confirmed total of at least 130 ships hit by missiles and mines. At least 70 merchant seaman have died in the attacks.

In late July, more than 400 people, most of them Iranian pilgrims, were killed in fights during an Iranian demonstration near Islam's holiest shrine in Mecca. Tehran and Riyadh each blamed the other for the attacks.

There was political turmoil in many Asian countries in 1987 — nowhere more so than South Korea where street protests forced President Chun Doo Hwan's military-dominated government to agree in late June to reforms and the first free presidential election in 16 years.

The opposition appeared to be in a strong position to win the election on December 16 but the two leading opposition candidates insisted on running and the split anti-government vote gave government candidate Roh Tae-Woo an easy victory.

In China, January 1987 saw

Communist party leader Hu

Yaobang being forced to quit

after nationwide pro-democracy student protests.

However, the hardline veterans

behind his dismissal were per-

suaded by senior leader Deng

Xiaoping to relinquish power

at the party's national congress

promises of reform there had been no noticeable improvement in food supplies.

Gorbachev's standing

among the liberal intelligentsia

and some workers had been

weakened by the dismissal in

November of Moscow party

chief Boris Yeltsin, a radical

reformer long regarded as one

of his chief lieutenants.

Many educated Russians

were shocked by the humili-

ation of the official at a meeting

addressed by the Kremlin chief

during which Yeltsin confessed

his errors after erstwhile aides

had accused him of political

and other offences.

And among more tradition-

ally-minded Soviet citizens,

there was clear displeasure over

what they saw as the extensive

concessions made by Gorba-

chev to the United States in his

bid to achieve the INF treaty.

On his return from the sum-

mit, he appeared defensive in

explaining the accord in a televi-

sion address. And his armed

forces chief-of-staff was sub-

sequently brought in to assure

the country that the military

backed the treaty.

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at the party's national congress



Disaster: Survivors of the collision between a ferry and a tanker in the Philippines. Over 2,000 people perished in shark-infested waters.

assess progress in implementing their plan and "make the pertinent decisions." There is widespread doubt that the meeting will result in a breakthrough.

In Europe, there were echoes of older enmities. On August 17, Rudolf Hess, the last surviving member of Hitler's inner circle, committed suicide in

August after 40 years in West Berlin's Spandau Prison. Spandau itself was demolished immediately afterwards to stop it becoming a neo-Nazi shrine.

In France, former SS com-

mander Klaus Barbie, the "Butcher of Lyons," was sen-

tenced to life imprisonment in July after being found guilty on 340 separate counts including the torture of resistance fighters.

The trial of the former Gestapo chief rekindled long-suppressed memories of Nazi occupation.

Worst

Some of the worst news of the year came from Africa according to the United Nations as many as six million Ethiopians now face famine because of drought and their country needs more than a million tonnes of food aid. In Mozambique, the government says, 4.5 million of the 12 million inhabitants are short of food.

Relief agencies have iden-

tified 17 other African coun-

tries in need of food because of

crop failure resulting from

drought, locusts and war.

Starting with Mauritania in

the west the drought belt, shaped like a question mark, stretches east across the continent to Somalia then bends south to Swaziland.

It sweeps through Mali, Burkin Faso, Nigeria, Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Zaire, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Angola, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Botswana.

There were several bad air

crashes in 1987. Crashes in

Detroit and Warsaw each

killed over 150 people. The last

weekend of November was the

most gruesome. A South

African Boeing 707 crashed

into the Indian ocean near the

island of Mauritius killing 160.

Next day, a Korean airlines

707 with 115 people on board

disappeared over Burma. South Korea said a mid-air

explosion destroyed the plane.

On December 7 a Pacific

Southwest airlines plane

crashed in California killing all 43

people on board. Investigators

who found a gun in the wreckage suspected a murder-suicide

plot by one of the passengers.

In February, mudslides

caused by an earthquake killed

1,000 near Quito in Ecuador.

A month later, 188 people

died when a British ferry, the

Herald of Free Enterprise,

capsized off the Belgian port of

Zeebrugge.

In late December, a Manila-

bound ferry with at least 1,500

passengers aboard sank off the

central Philippines after a collision with another ship.

Some of the world's great

musicians died during the year.

In June, Andres Segovia,

generally regarded as the

world's greatest classical

guitarist, passed away in

Madrid, aged 94. He took the

classical guitar from the gypsy

haunts of his native Andalusia

and almost alone elevated it to

its honoured place on the

concert stage.

British Cellist Jacqueline Du

Pre died in October, 14 years

after the crippling disease mul-

tiple sclerosis forced her to

abandon her concert career at

the peak of international suc-

cess.

In December Jascha Heifetz,

the Russian-born virtuoso

violinist, died in Los Angeles at

the age of 86.

Hollywood also lost some of

its legends:

— Fred Astaire, the epitome of

elegance who danced his way

through 31 musical hits, in

June, aged 88.

— Comedian Danny Kaye,

superb mimic and star of stage,

screen, television and cabarets

for more than 40 years, in

March aged 74.

— Liberace, who puts sparkle

into the classics and charmed

audiences throughout the world

with his dazzling smile, rippling keyboard style and

outlandish wardrobe, in Los

Angeles in February aged 67.



BUSINESS & FINANCE

Loans settlement scheme a success: Sheikh Salem



Sheikh Salem Abdul Aziz

THE difficult bank loans settlement scheme had achieved good results and these were reflected on the banking system and the whole local economy, the Governor of Kuwait's Central Bank, Sheikh Salem Abdul Aziz Al Sabah, said.

He told a local newspaper that 698 dealers with a debt of KD 408.5 million had no problems because they had surplus funds and had either repaid the loans or arranged to repay them.

Debtors

Up to Dec 10 the problem was limited to 1,129 debtors with a total debt of KD 1,846.4 million.

The debts of 1,066 or 94.4 per cent of the dealers had already been technically settled. Their total debts amounted to KD 1,689.1 million or 92 per cent of the loans on dealers facing a deficit.

He said that only a very few dealers therefore remained and it was clear from the figures that the scheme was about to be completed.

He said that 779 settlements had been documented at the Justice Ministry until Dec 10, adding that this number would increase greatly by the end of this year because the local banks had many settlements ready for documentation.

Sheikh Salem said the Central Bank had instructed the local commercial banks to take the necessary legal action against all dealers who had not cooperated with the settlement.

Action

Debtors who had not come for settlement, had no right to make settlements now, and would face legal action. He added that local banks had already begun such legal steps.

Speaking about the government bills and bonds, the governor said the Central Bank had made three issues so far with a total value of KD 628 million, and these had been covered in full. The bank had received a flood of demands for buying bills and bonds, and there had been stiff competition in purchasing them.

Sheikh Salem pointed out that the issue of these instruments had helped greatly in building a frame for interest rates on the Kuwaiti dinar now and for the future.

He said these bills and bonds had created an active secondary market for their sale and purchase.

KIO raises stake in BP

LONDON, Dec 30, (Reuter): The Kuwait Investment Office (KIO), an investment arm of the Kuwait government, has raised its stake in oil giant British Petroleum Co Plc (BP) to 17.4 per cent from 17.07 per cent a week ago, a KIO spokesman said today.

He told Reuters that KIO bought a further 22 million BP partly paid-up shares at 70.5 pence (\$1.31) each yesterday. This was just above the 70 pence quoted on the London Stock Exchange at midday today for the recent issue.

The spokesman declined to confirm whether KIO, which has been steadily building up a stake in BP since the flopped sell-off of the government's remaining shareholding in October, would continue to buy BP shares in the market.

Unwanted

The 70.5 pence price KIO paid for its latest purchase was just half a pence above the price at which the Bank of England is offering until January 6 to buy back unwanted part-paid shares from the public.

The British Central Bank made the offer to help underpin the new issue after it was heavily undersubscribed at its launch at \$1.20 (\$2.23) a share payable immediately in October.

KIO raised its stake just as BP, the world's third biggest oil company, was preparing to release its offer document for the whole of the issued share capital of independent British oil company Briliof Plc.

Policy makers try to evolve right corporate strategy

Financial system generates new mood of optimism

Dr Abdullah M. S. Ghanem is the Director of the Institute of Banking Studies. He was a member of the high-level committee appointed by the government to recommend measures to reactivate the Kuwaiti economy. Ghanem spoke last week with Arab Times' Business Editor M. C. Bose.

QUESTION: Your recent publication 'The Financial Index of Companies listed in the Kuwait Stock Exchange' draws an overall improvement in the performance of the corporate sector. Do you consider this performance to continue in 1988?

Answer: The corporate sector in Kuwait experienced a major setback in both 1984 and 1985 due to the economic recession and the crash of Souk Al-Masakh. This trend was reversed in 1986 with the overall performance of the corporate units showing an improvement. In terms of profit, the sector as a whole registered a net profit of KD 35.60 million as against a net loss of KD 178.00 million in 1985. The average return on equity, an important measure of financial performance, improved to 4.12 per cent in 1986 as against a negative 19.37 per cent in 1985. Similarly there was also a marginal improvement in the market capitalisation (market value of equity shares).

A company may be called a highly profitable company if its return on equity is 15 per cent or more. In 1985, as many as 18 companies made losses. Thus the scenario in 1986 was considerably better than that of 1985. But this does not suggest that everything is fine with the Kuwaiti companies.

Take the example of industrial sector. A considerable number of production units are operating much below their optimum production capacity because of the limited local market and non-availability of protection and adequate subsidy to local production. In the process, their production efficiency is low and their costs are high and therefore, they are not able to compete in the local or international markets.

We all agree that a strong non-oil sector is a pre-condition for diversifying our economy. In this context, it is imperative that some of the industries — especially the new born ones — require protection. Another step will be to encourage consumption of locally produced commodities. Also, there is a case for encouraging export of locally manufactured goods.

Speaking of the strength and weaknesses of the companies, two aspects need to be mentioned. First, most companies may have to professionalise their management cadres. A profes-

sionally trained management can introduce innovations, and remember that, without innovation profits will be squeezed.

A second aspect is that corporate units will have to develop an adequate corporate reporting system with a detailed disclosure on the working of the companies. This can not only go a long way in improving corporate performance but it will also help the policy makers to evolve the right corporate strategy.

Q: Does the improved performance of the corporate sector suggest that the outlook for the Kuwaiti economy is now more hopeful than at any time since 1983? Do you foresee a significant growth in the economy next year?

A: An improved corporate performance is a good sign of recovery of the Kuwaiti economy. It indeed reflects the revival of the non-oil sector of the Kuwaiti economy from the deep recession it had been through since the second half of 1982. This was made possible by a series of measures taken by the government in the past two years.

They are mainly, the banks' debt settlement programme, lowering of interest rates, new housing formula, share splitting, land appropriation scheme, and a more importantly, an encouraging monetary policy pursued by the Central Bank. All these have laid the foundations for economic revitalisation.

Consequently, last year there was a relative recovery in the markets for financial and real estate assets. The volume of shares traded increased in 1986 to 430 million shares as against 178 million shares in 1985 and 19 million shares in 1984.

With the noticeable improvement in land prices in some residential areas, the average value of residential properties decreased by only 12.2 per cent in 1986 compared with 30.5 per cent drop in 1985. Also, the drop in rent was partially arrested. Increase in the number of housing starts, and the new housing formula involving low cost plot with loan, and increased provision of development expenditure in the current year's budget should have led to some pick-up in construction activity. At the same time, the wholesale and retail trade are yet to register a significant improvement. On the whole, we can say that the worst is over.

The government's programme



Dr Abdullah M. S. Ghanem

to settle the non-performing loans which hanged over the financial system has generated a new mood of optimism in the private sector. This should bring about adequate momentum in the domestic economy.

Externally, the current account of the balance of payments remained healthy in 1986. Given the sharp rise in oil prices in 1987 and the policy to rationalise the public expenditure, external balance in 1987 was much better than in 1986. The recent Opec agreement to adhere to the production quotas suggests a further firming of oil prices. Thus, the Kuwaiti economy enters the New Year with hopeful signs.

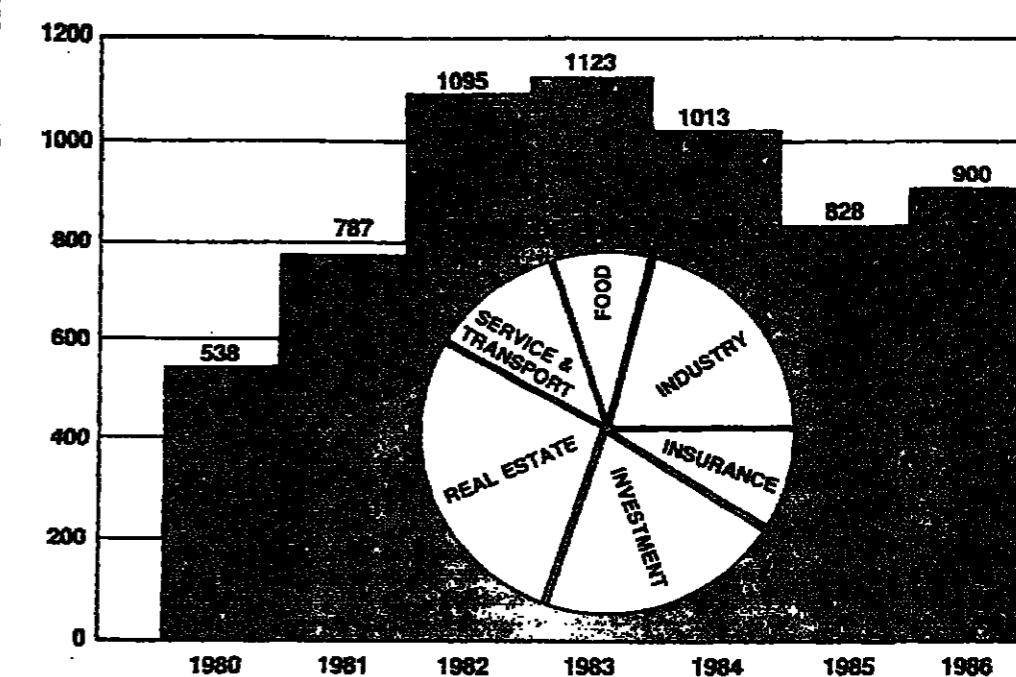
Q: Do you think the upturn in share prices tends to reflect the growing confidence in the economic environment, in particular, the government's policies?

A: During 1987, share prices registered a satisfactory increase. During the first half of the year, the all-share price index for Kuwaiti stocks registered a 5.8 per cent gain as compared to a 4.1 per cent drop in the price of Gulf shares. On average, in 1987 Kuwaiti stocks stood at 42 per cent of the price level prevailing as of end 1983. In the parallel market also, a similar trend was discernable.

Q: Do you think the performance of the Kuwaiti banking sector next year? Do you think the debt settlement programme restores confidence and encourages greater domestic lending by banks?

A: The programme to settle problem loans has done much to

SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY OF KSE COMPANIES (MILLION KD)



This improvement in share market activity is a reflection of the renewed confidence gained by the investors. Splitting of shares could have attracted a large number of small investors.

Allowing Kuwaiti shareholding companies to buy up to 10 per cent of their stocks priced at market value generated some activity. To be sure, the settlement of difficult debts of banks provided a favourable sentiment. Other measures like the regulation of Gulf joint stock companies quoted on the market, the liquidation and merger of some companies and the introduction of a system confining daily share price movements to a narrow range also had a positive impact on the market.

Interestingly, this year's share movements reflected a change in the investors' outlook. Investors have become more sophisticated and less speculative. As a result, share prices more or less moved in line with the economic fundamentals.

Q: How do you envisage the performance of the Kuwaiti banking sector next year? Do you think the debt settlement programme restores confidence and encourages greater domestic lending by banks?

A: The programme to settle

problem loans has done much to

restore confidence in the banking sector. Clearance of debt overhang cleared up banks' lending activities. Consequently, banks' lending to the private sector in 1987 (up to Sept.) increased by KD 309 million as compared to an increase of just KD 112 million and KD 88.6 million in the comparable periods of 1986 and 1985 respectively.

Details for September — the most recent available — show that lending grew to all sectors except real estate, where it has declined by KD 3 million in the first 9 months of 1987. Lending to trading and construction sectors showed a jump of KD 53.9 and KD 73 million respectively in 1987 as against increases of KD 3.1 million and KD 33.4 million in the same period of 1986.

Notably, lending to the construction sector showed a rise to KD 774.1 million in Sept 1987, the highest level recorded in recent years.

No doubt that this pick-up in

bank credit is a healthy sign.

Given the prospects for a further

revival of the economy and the

reduction in cost of borrowing

owing to a downward interest

rate adjustment credit demand

will gradually increase. The three

sectors which will generate much

of the credit demand will be

trade, construction and financial

institutions.

But then the expected additional credit requirement will only use up a portion of the vast deployable resources available with banks. This is natural given the limited absorptive capacity of the Kuwaiti economy. Hence, banks will have to extend their business abroad in search of asset growth. While doing so, banks may have to diversify their foreign assets portfolio with a view to increasing the return on such assets. Note that presently, banks' assets abroad are largely held in risk-free deposits with banks.

Even domestically, banks may

have to venture into new lines of

business to increase their

profitability. There is now an

increasing realisation that retail

banking in the local market is

insufficiently profitable. The

recent trend in the region has

been to switch banks' focus to

investment and merchant banking.

Perhaps, it is time that Kuwaiti banks moved into investment and merchant banking to

meet the growing needs of high

net worth individuals and the

growing corporate entities. Once

the Gulf economy picks up, it will

open a number of opportunities to Kuwaiti banks.

World Business Summary

A mood of cautious optimism prevails

LONDON, Dec 30, (Kuna): Comparatively stable oil prices and good investment earnings have resulted in renewed business confidence in Kuwait over the last year, according to a specialist shipping newspaper. In a special three-page supplement on Kuwait, Lloyd's List focused on the economy, shipping and oil market in the country.

A mood of "cautious optimism" after two years of recession prevailed and the government had turned the economy around after settling the fall out from 1982's Souk Al Manakh collapse. Most experts agreed that the upturn in economic activity over the last year was built on firmer ground than the highly speculative days of the late 70s and early 80s, the daily said. The economy was perhaps more vulnerable to the recent stock market crash than fears about oil prices, it noted, but the estimated \$86.000 million invested by the Kuwaitis worldwide was part of a long-term strategy and not based on quick profit-taking.

The government had moved to reduce Kuwait's overdependence on crude and products sales and this had already met with some success.

The paper also commented that the insurance sector was set for a modest upturn in premium income this year, stemming from an increase in government spending over the last year which had stimulated construction work in the country.

Meanwhile, according to a Gulf report based on International Monetary Fund statistics, total GCC imports from Japan, the US and EEC member states dropped from \$55.74 billion in 1984 to \$46.599 billion in 1985 and to \$40.724 billion in 1986. GCC states' imports from 1984 to 1986, dropped as follows: Kuwait from \$7.902 to \$5.634 billion, United Arab Emirates from \$7.043 to \$6.750 billion, Bahrain from \$3.524 to \$3.390 billion, Saudi Arabia from \$33.695 to \$22.114 billion, Oman from \$2.748 to \$2.714 billion, Qatar from \$1.162 to \$1.095 billion.

Japan cuts business operations in Iran

TOKYO, Dec 30, (Reuter): Japanese companies are sharply cutting new import contracts with Iran and laying off staff or closing their Tehran offices, the mass circulation Yomiuri Shimbun reported today.

The cuts follow an advisory from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry to Japanese companies urging them to reduce their dealings with Iran, the newspaper said.

A Miti spokesman was not available for comment because of the extended New Year holiday. Japan receives more than half of its oil supplies through the Strait of Hormuz and thus has been anxious to avoid antagonising Gulf war combatants Iran and Iraq. The Yomiuri said Japan was expected to reduce new oil import contracts by a hefty 33 per cent from January next year to a total of around 240,000 barrels of Iranian crude oil.

Japanese companies plan to reduce Tehran staff by an average of 20 per cent to a total of 210 employees, and two unidentified companies have closed their Tehran offices, it said. Trade between Iran and Japan fell markedly during the first half of 1987. Japan's dollar-based exports to Iran dropped 20 per cent to \$537 million, while its imports from Iran fell 22.6 per cent to \$846 million.

Total reserves estimated at KD25b

Kuwait regains financial confidence

By M.C. Bose

THE chief economist and assistant general manager of the National Bank of Kuwait, Dr Ziad Taky, has said there are more indications that the Kuwaiti economy is completing the consolidation process that has been taking place in the last four years. This is reflected in the relative stability in oil revenues experienced during 1987 and the adoption by the government of an expansionary fiscal policy which involves increasing overall expenditures by 3.4 per cent, including an increase of 7.5 per cent in allocations for development projects, emphasizing those that generate greater activity in the local economy.

Dr Taky told the Arab Times that the outlook for the domestic economy during 1988 remains favourable but affected to a great extent by developments in the international oil markets and whether any progress is achieved in the reduction of hostilities in the region.

However, it is expected that the first half of 1988 will still be affected by expenditures set in the 1987-88 budget.

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

LONDON

(Alpha Stocks)

LONDON

(Beta Stocks)

NAME LAST

NAME LAST

NAME LAST

NAME LAST

NAME LAST

NAME LAST

Gold softens

Central banks steady dollar

LONDON, Dec. 30. (Reuter): The dollar steadied today to trade just above record lows after the US, Japanese and European central banks all intervened to prop it up.

Trading was thin, and few investors or speculators were willing to either buy or sell dollars heavily in the year-end holiday season.

Now were they eager to do much in stock markets, which generally firmed. Wall Street shares rose about 1.2 per cent with the Dow Jones industrial average up as much as 22.71 points in early trading to a morning high of 1,949.6.

Rates

Washington was seen as likely to be reluctant to raise interest rates — "even if this means letting the dollar take the strain for a while yet," as one bank economist put it.

Higher interest rates would lure investors to buy dollar assets and so strengthen the dollar, but would add to the dangers of recession posed by the October stock market crash.

"They just slowed people down temporarily for the rest of

the day and rest of the year," a London currency dealer said.

But dealers said the trading slowdown for the end of the year probably did not signal a return of calm to financial markets.

The market is still targeting a lower dollar, but not today, the treasurer of a major US bank in Frankfurt said.

Despite the way the Federal Reserve joined in the concerted central bank intervention today, dealers wondered how vigorously the United States would be ready to prop the dollar in 1988, a presidential election year.

Sell-off

A weaker dollar could bite into European and Japanese companies' export earnings — bad news for investors in their shares and for those stock markets.

World stock markets today

wound down to year-end and trading was thin. Tokyo has been

closed since Monday and is not

due to reopen until next Monday.

It was the final day of 1987

trading in West Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Spain. All major markets will be closed on Friday.

"Prices on the last trading day

are always very cosmetic," said a Frankfurt broker. The 60-share Commerzbank index rose 14 points, or 1.1 percent, to 1,299.7.

London shares rallied after a sharp sell-off yesterday, with the FTSE 100-share index up as

much as 29.9 points, or 1.7 per cent, to a high of 1,760.2. London shares fell 3.4 percent yesterday, the first trading day after Christmas, with confidence shaken by the dollar's steep falls.

Zurich shares rose, with the All-Share Swiss index up 7.4 points to 7769.3 — which is 308.4 points below the end-of-1986 level. Belgian shares were mixed. Milan's MIB index rose 0.74 percent while Norwegian and Swedish shares firmed.

The Paris bourse indicator eased 0.46 per cent.

London brokers cited a somewhat steadier dollar and bargain hunting for today's rally in London Stocks. But they said the big test would come next Monday after the New Year break.

Price

The price of an ounce of gold was fixed in the London market this afternoon at \$484.10 an ounce, down \$2.65 from yesterday's London close.

The pound sterling was worth \$1.8557 at 1200 GMT, down from \$1.8585 last night. News that leading indicators of the performance of the US economy fell 1.7 per cent in November had little impact on dollar dealing or stocks.



Money brokers show boredom during lacklustre trading on the Tokyo foreign exchange market yesterday. The dollar ended at 123.50 yen and 1.5940/50 marks against 123.40/50 yen and 1.5940/50 in New York on Tuesday. (Reuter wirephoto)

January seen a crucial month for Opec oil price

LONDON, Dec. 30. (Reuter):

Divisions in the Opec organisation threaten a severe test of its ability to maintain oil prices in the early weeks of 1988, market experts said today.

January is normally a month

when crude oil demand slips.

The deficit-reduction package that Congress managed to pass last week gets low marks from many economists: more is surely needed. Runaway budget deficits decrease confidence in the future of the dollar, and thus foreigners' willingness to hold dollar investments.

Many economists argue that the US should rely more on taxes on consumption, such as a national sales tax, less on taxes on investment, such as capital gains taxes.

Allan H. Meltzer of Carnegie-Mellon University says this would help businesses increase productivity.

The dollar should be allowed to find its own level in the market. If speculators wish to continue to operate, let them guess at market factors, not the manipulative measures of government officials.

The result could be pleasantly surprising.

Abdul Rachman Ramly, president of Indonesia's state oil firm Pertamina, meanwhile said Indonesia would not be bound by the agreement if others violated output ceilings or price rules.

Algeria, a traditional Opec hawk whose aim is an eventual price of \$28, also sees a gloomy future for the organisation.

Opec had failed to "take concrete measures against negative phenomena such as over-production by certain member states." Algeria's official APS news agency said on Monday.

The recent Opec ministerial meeting, which ended in Vienna on December 14, only managed to agree to extend into 1988 a price and output package that applied in 1987.

Despite strong pressure from Gulf Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, Iraq was not awarded the production quota "equal to Iran's which it sought and was not part of the new pact."

The failure to clinch an effective accord could not have come at a worse time, analysts said. Western demand for Opec oil normally falls by around 1.3 million barrels daily in the first quarter of each year as refiners draw on stocks built up in the autumn and early winter.

Stocks now are above those at the end of 1986 and, although not large, could tip the supply-demand balance against Opec.

Opec has been producing close to 20 million barrels a day, even though its output ceiling is set at 16.6 million.

Some analysts believe companies could draw up to 2.5 million barrels daily from stock, so demand on Opec could be as low as 16 million barrels a day in the first three months of 1988.

Fresh move to stimulate GCC economic activities

KUWAIT'S Finance Minister Jasem Al Khoraifi has said that the economic statement released at the conclusion of the GCC 8th Summit Conference in Riyadh constituted a fresh impetus for more joint economic work by the GCC citizens, and served to broaden the possibilities of deepening economic ties through the various new measures and fresh economic facilities granted to GCC citizens.

He told the *Seyassat* newspaper that the GCC financial and economic cooperation committee would meet on Feb 17 and 18 to continue deliberations for reaching a unified customs tariff to be put in effect on the date specified by the Higher GCC council so that the fruits of the overall economic development could be reaped by all GCC countries and citizens.

Innovation

Khoraifi will start an official four-day visit to Egypt on Tuesday at the invitation of Egyptian Deputy Premier and Planning Minister Dr Kamal Al Jazouri.

Khoraifi and his accompanying delegation will hold talks with Egyptian Premier Dr Atef Sedki, Central Bank Governor Dr Salah Hamed and Health Minister Dr Raqeib Dwaider on economic relations and ways of upgrading cooperation between the two countries.

Economic talks

DAMASCUS, Dec 30, (Kuna): The visiting Bulgarian Trade Minister Khristo Khristov today met with Syrian Premier Mahmoud Al Zo'bi.

During the meeting, they reviewed the existing cooperation between the two countries and accomplishments of the joint Syrian-Bulgarian work committee on the executive programme for developing economic cooperation in various fields.

KUWAIT NATIONAL PETROLEUM COMPANY K.S.C.

Tenders are invited for the supply of the following:-

Tender No.	Material	Quantity	Tender Fee	Issuing Date	Closing Date
1/813S/0	Office Furniture	KD. 2/-	4-1-1988	18-1-1988	
1/784R/0	Melamine Tables & Chairs	KD. 2/-	4-1-1988	18-1-1988	

Tender documents can be purchased from the office of the Supdt. Administrative Services, KNPC head office as from 4-1-1988.

Ministry of Interior Notice of Vacancies

The Ministry of Interior wishes you (both Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis) to occupy the following vacant positions in the Administration of Data Processing Centre under the following terms and conditions:

First: Positions:

1. Systems Analyst

2. Systems Programmer in the following fields:

- a) Operating Systems by applying the operational systems (MVS/XA)
- b) On-line systems by applying data bases of (CICS/VS)
- c) Communications by applying the programmes (MCCP/NCP/VTAM)

3. Computer Operator

Second General conditions:

1. The applicants for the first position must be graduate in the field of computer with practical experience not less than (2) years in evaluating and pursuing computer applications in addition to planning for future applications together with studying their feasibility.

2. The applicants for the second position must be graduate preferably in the field of electronics computers' science and engineering with practical experience not less than (3) three years in the field of the required speciality.

3. The applicants for the third position must have practical experience as computer operator of IBM Systems (4341, 4381, 3081, 3090) and another experience not less than (2) two years in applying MVS/XA-VSE/SP-VM/SP Systems; and in addition to that, graduates will be preferred.

4. Good command of English — spoken and written — is a common and essential qualifying condition for occupying any of these vacant positions.

5. Passing the required interviews and set tests is requisite.

6. The picked candidate for any of the said positions will be subject to other legal stipulations of employment.

Third:

Submitting applications:

Applications are to be submitted in person to the Personnel and Training Department at Shuaib Residential Area on special forms set for this purpose. Documents are to be attached without binding the Ministry to give them back for any reason, whatsoever.

Undersecretary

International business in 1987

(Continued from Page 11)

Alan Greenspan succeeded Paul Volcker as chairman of America's Federal Reserve Board. He didn't say the right things before the crash, but did afterwards.

Debt crisis

Banks increased provisions against dicey foreign loans. Citicorp diverted \$3 billion of its profit into a cushion against loan losses, chiefly in Latin America. Other British and American banks followed some cursing quietly.

Brazil stopped servicing its bank debts but later did a deal with banks which suggested that it would try to catch up on repayments to more than 100 of them. The Paris Club of creditor nations rescheduled \$2 billion of Argentine debt.

Michel Camdessus succeeded Jacques de Larosiere as managing director of the IMF. Gene Rotberg quit as a treasurer of the World Bank during a staff shake-up.

Privatisation and flotation

Everybody was privatising. British Airways' shares began

trading at an 84 per cent premium; those in Nippon Telegraph and Telephone made their debut at \$10,500 each, making it the world's largest company market capitalisation: Paribas, a French investment banking group, was almost 38 times oversubscribed.

The Bank of England acted as long-stop by offering a pre-set floor price, and the Kuwait Investment Office later bought a big stake in BP. Eurotunnel, the project to build a Channel tunnel, raised its finance but its shares went to an immediate, steep discount. The Japanese government's flotation of about \$5 billion-worth of shares in Japan Air Lines took off smoothly.

Mergers and takeovers

A cheaper American dollar produced tempting buys for acquisitive European and Japanese companies. JWT, America's best-known advertising agency, was sold to WPP, a British marketing services group for \$566m: Blue Arrow, a British employment agency, bought Manpower Services, the world's biggest provider of temporary workers, for \$1.3 billion; and Paribas' Sony bought America's CBS Records for \$2 billion.

Cross-border European mergers grew bolder. Sweden's ASEA and Switzerland's Brown Boveri, two heavy engineers, merged most of their operations. British Airways beat Scandinavian SAS in the battle to buy British Caledonian.

America told the GATT that it wants farm subsidies phased out by 2000, but European countries and Japan dithered in the face of their farm lobbies. America imposed punitive 100 per cent tariffs on \$300m-a-year of Japanese electronic exports. The tariffs were cut back as America cleared some Japanese companies of dumping memory chips.

America and Europe squabbled over subsidies for Boeing and Airbus Industrie.

The chairman and president of Toshiba Corporation resigned in a row with America over the company's sale to the Soviet

Union of milling machines, which were allegedly used to make quieter propellers for Russian submarines.

The cocoa organisation collapsed. Opec lost its grip on its members and oil prices slid from a summer high of \$21 a barrel to below \$15.

Commodities and goings

Glasnost and perestroika became the catchwords for a new-Jook Russia. The Supreme Soviet approved economic reforms to give state businesses more autonomy and a market slant.

Henry Ford II, for 35 years boss of the Ford Motor Company founded by his grandfather, died in Detroit aged 70.

Ivan Boesky, Wall Street's crooked arbitrager turned supergrass, was jailed for three years for insider trading. He tipped off Britain's official gunshoos about a share-support operation during the takeover by Guinness, a British drinks company, of rival Distillers. Ernest Saunders resigned as Guinness's chairman and was later charged with Companys Act offences, along with others. More arrests are expected.

Egypt has an artificial book-keeping rate for the pound sterling used in its trade deals with the Soviet Union since the 1950s.

Earlier this month, the government raised the rate to two Egyptian pounds from 1.35 to one sterling as an incentive for more trade between the two countries.

While the trade picture looks dim compared with 1981, when US farmers sold a record 162 million tonnes of goods overseas, it is considerably brighter than in 1986, when exports dropped to 110 million tonnes.

Continued high government outlays are necessary, he said, to combat foreign subsidies, and they will be reduced only through an international agreement.

Boosted by low US prices and a declining dollar, US exports are forecast to rise over nine per cent

Farm prospects looking up

WASHINGTON, Dec. 30. (Reuter): US Agriculture Secretary Richard Lyng said yesterday he was upbeat as 1988 approaches, encouraged by stronger US farm exports, lower stocks and production costs, and firming land prices.

But the top US agriculture official said the outlook is clouded by continued financial stress in some regions and costly government farm programmes that require vast stretches of land to be idled.

Prices

And Lyng warned, agriculture's longer term prospects will depend largely on the outcome of thorny global trade talks that have just begun.

Boosted by low US prices and a declining dollar, US exports are forecast to rise over nine per cent

GIC to finance projects in GCC

Happy New Year to all our readers



ARAB TIMES

Classifieds

MARKET PLACE

ACCOMMODATION

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JULIEE Al Shiyokh, near super market. Independent room required for a lady to share with a family. Rent offered KD 25. Tele. Mr Sampath. 4813233, 9:30 am - 3 pm.

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FARWANIYA, independent room for one Goan bachelor. Tele. 2445611.

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SHARQ, Shamiya, Keifan or City area. One bedroom flat with living room, bathroom and kitchen for a Bangladeshi Muslim couple. Tele. Mr Syed. 240 5127.

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SALWA, near Kuwait English School, deluxe CAC, new apartments consisting of 3 bedrooms, living and dining area, 2 bathrooms, large kitchen and balcony. Rent KD 320. Tele. 5391720. 5382783.

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KEIFAN, Block 4, House 41, Ibn Hisham St. Accommodation for an Indian R.C. bachelor to share with another bachelor. Rent KD 25. Tele. Louis. 4847165.

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SHAMIYA, one CAC room, with a meal, for two Indian bachelors to share with another Indian bachelor. Rent KD 555. Tele. 5612336, 10 am - 12 noon only.

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KEIFAN, Block 5, Street 56, House 4 (near Aslam Saloon). Rooms for families. Tele. Ijaz Hussain. 4830694.

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SHALMIYA, to share a 2 bedroom fully furnished CAC flat with tele for one European or American lady. Tele. 2415604, 8 am - 12 noon. 5626250, 2 - 5pm, 6 - 10pm.

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SALMIYA, to share a 2 bedroom fully furnished CAC flat with tele for one European or American lady. Tele. 2415604, 8 am - 12 noon. 5626250, 2 - 5pm, 6 - 10pm.

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SALWA, House 196, Block 7, Gohund Iraji shop. Two rooms with kitchen, water and electricity for family/bachelors to share with an Indian family. Rent KD 50. 30 Tele. 5611243.

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KEIFAN, Block 4, House 41, Ibn Hisham St. Accommodation for an Indian R.C. bachelor to share with another bachelor. Rent KD 25. Tele. Louis. 4847165.

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FOR SALE

Computers

APPLE, Compatible 64K, 2 disk drives, joystick, mouse, Hi-res mono monitor, 80-Column printer. KD 180. Tele. 5733780 except mornings.

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EDUCATIONAL micro (computer) trainer for children, with 10 learning activities in one. KD 10 only. Tele. 4740648, after 4pm.

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Cars

MITSUBISHI Colt GLX 1985, manual, 15-speed) hatchback, 4 doors, white, AC, radio, cassette, 47,000 kms, well-maintained, KD850. Tele. 3715354 after 4pm.

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TOYOTA Cressida GL 1985, AC, automatic, beige, reg. upto Dec 1988, in excellent condition. KD2000. Tele. Hillary 5629563, 2 - 3:30 pm, 7:30 pm on wards.

(AT5-40379-3)

JAGUAR XJ6, 1979, no engine, needs new blue book. KD 150. Tele. 3947564, 3:30 - 7pm.

(AT5-40312-3)

NISSAN Laurel 1983, 6 cylinder, in excellent condition. KD 900, one. Tele. 2409060, 2429302, Ext 5202.

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BUICK Le Sabre Dec 81, AC, automatic, registered upto Dec 88, with all options, in excellent condition. Tele. 4891758.

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SOFA set, carpets and curtains, 3 children's beds with wardrobes, washing machine, cooker, dryer, refrigerator, KD 800. Tele. Mr. Robby. 4743152, 7am - 3pm, 5:30pm-6:45pm.

(AT5-40313-6)

WASHING machine, dryer, electric cooker, fridge/freezer, AC, dining table, wardrobe, antenna, rotator with cables, carpets and drapes with rails. Tele. Mansell. 4835218, 8am - 2:30pm.

(AT5-40393-3)

POWER tools, 2 Hilti drills, nail fixing pistol, electric magger, hydraulic cutter, 110 volts drills. Tele. 2641624, during office hours.

(AT5-40314-3)

SALMIYA (behind Indian Junior School): 2 bedroom flat with tele. and furniture for sale. Rent KD130. Tele. 5611139 after 2pm.

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AMPLIFIER for musical instruments, one Roland Jazz/Chorus-50 (slightly used), one Guyatone No. Zip-601 (brand new). Tele. Mamoun 5719024.

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PRE-SCHOOL and nursery education for children 2-1/2 years old and above, given by a qualified and experienced teacher in Fahadheel. Tele. 3927875, 8am - 7pm.

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ALL subjects for primary classes, by an Indian School (Kuwait) teacher. Flat 23, Faiza Store, Building No. 1740-1/1613, opposite Jumeirah Video or Al Abeer Nursery, Abbasia.

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The Filipino basketball tournament sparked the most interest in that community.



An action shot of Kuwait's qualifier against Iraq.



The Evergreen squad which won the most number of cricket trophies.

CRICKET RETAINS NO. 1 SPOT AMONG EXPATRIATES

Kuwait's soccer squad nears its goal

By Yawar Maqsood
Sports Editor

KUWAIT'S triumphs on the soccer field and superb organisation of international events will remain the enduring sporting memory of 1987.

For the first time in nearly five years, the Kuwait national soccer team seemed to have regained the brilliance which took it into the World Cup finals in 1982.

With the first round of the qualifiers for the 1988 Olympics completed, Kuwait was happily placed at the top of their group which includes Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Kuwait were held to a goalless draw in Qatar but beat the toughest teams, Saudi Arabia and Iraq, in their home-leg games. With three more games to come, including a home tie against Qatar, Kuwait is expected to take its place at the Seoul Games barring a sudden loss of form by the national team.

Appointment

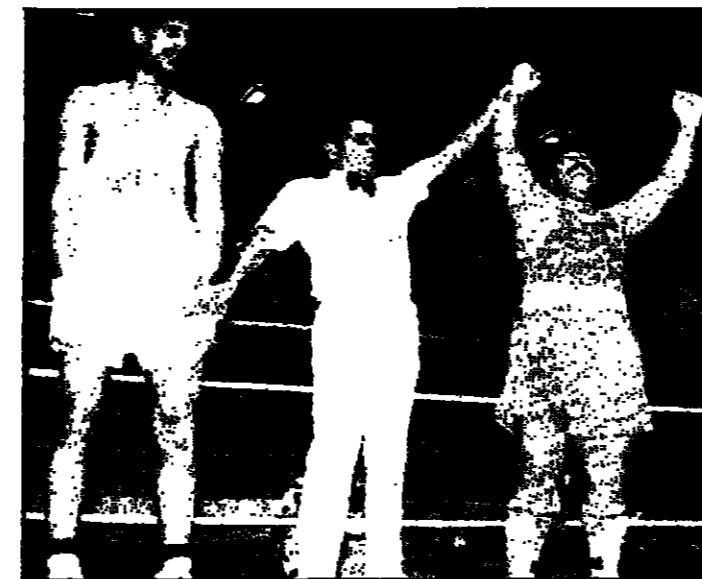
The turn in Kuwait soccer team's fortunes seems to have come through the appointment of Sheikh Fahd Al Ahmed, the chairman of the Olympic Council of Asia, as the president of the Kuwait Football Association.

It was Sheikh Fahd who guided the soccer team to the 1982 World Cup finals and with him back at the helm of affairs, Kuwait's fortunes seem on the rise.

While the soccer team was engaged in trying to regain its lost glory, Kuwait earned a lot of praise for its excellent organisation of three international events.

The first of these events, the Kuwait International Rally, was organised in March and won by Qatar's Saeed Al Hajri. The rally which had been dropped in 1985 because of some sloppy organisation in 1984 earned good marks this year and the organisers were hoping to improve on this performance in the coming year.

Kuwait's handling of the Asian Volleyball Championships proved to the world that it was ready to organise bigger events. The organisers were commended for their efforts by the president of the International



Ali Al Bloushi (right) won the gold medal for Kuwait.

Volleyball Federation and also by all the heads of delegation which took part in the event.

Not only did Kuwait do well in organising this event, it also qualified for the playoffs for the 1988 Olympics by finishing fourth after Japan, China and South Korea.

As the year ended, Kuwait did a marvellous job at organising the 13th Asian Boxing Championship. The president of the International Boxing Federation, Anwar Choudhry, said that Kuwait had proved that it was ready to host even bigger events. Kuwait also won a gold medal and a silver at the event.

Kuwait's riders carried on where they left last year and enhanced their reputation on the international scene.

Jamila Al Mutawa was named the Best Arab Rider at the Dubai Horse Show. She won the Dubai Television Stakes and was second in the Port Rashid Authority Stakes.

Captured

Jamila's sister, Nadia, brought home two medals more by finishing second in two events — the Etienne Stakes and Dunhill Cup.

The Etienne Stakes was won by Kuwait's Rakad Al Thaifeiri. He also finished first in the Emirates Golf Club Stakes. In the same event, young Nadir Ibrahim topped the Junior News Stakes.

Jamila did quite well on the local scene also by winning the Al Ahm's Cup. Nadia finished second in the same event. Lamya Al Issa scored a victory in the Dunhill Showjumping Competition.

On the athletics track, Kuwait did not fare very well. It won only one medal at the Asian Track and Field Championship — a silver through Jasim Al Duwella in the 400 metres hurdles. Jasim later won a bronze in the Arab Athletics Championships in Algiers.

Ghanim Gohar, however, captured a gold medal in the Arab meet in the javelin throw. Also at the same meeting, Mohammed Zankawi, Riyad Abdullah and Smeh Farhan won bronze medals.

Kuwait's tennis players

proved that they were the best in the region when they won both the titles in the open and under-14 category at the GCC Tennis Championship after a close competition with Bahrain.

Kazmah Soccer Club added to Kuwait's victories by finishing first in the GCC Soccer Clubs Championship while Habib Ahmed Saleh got a gold medal at the World Fencing Challenge for the handicapped.

On the local soccer scene, Kazmah saw its Kuwait Soccer League title for the 1986-87 season snatched away in the same year by Al Arabi when the Kuwait Football Federation decided to finish the 1987-88 season by November to give enough time to the national team to practice for the Seoul Games qualifiers.

Remained

Among the expatriates, cricket remained the most popular sport. More than 40 tournaments were still being held while some of the finals for the 1986-87 tournaments were held late this year.

In the finals held this year various trophies were won by the following:

Gulf Bank Trophy 1986-87 — Starlite; Malhotra Trophy — Kifco; Burgan Bank Trophy 1986-87 — Unity; GCL Trophy 1986-87 — Evergreen who also retained the trophy this year; Bawa Shield — BKME; Kifco



Children perform one of the routines at the start of the Asian Boxing Championship.

Trophy — Evergreen; Jinnah Trophy — Unity; Capri Trophy — Punjab; Pat Keeley Trophy — Evergreen; Rahma Trophy — Hubara; Champions Trophy — Evergreen; Zarga Trophy — Starlite; Winner's Cup — Capri; Rising Star Trophy — Colis; Speedbird Trophy — Great Britain; Hawaii Cricket League Trophy — Friends; Pirelli Challenge Cup — Kuwait XI; President's Trophy — Evergreen and Four-a-side Tournament — Evergreen.

On the golf course, Fathi Al Khadra became the first Kuwaiti to win the Kuwait Golf Championship. In some of the other golf tournaments, K.H. Chung finished first in the Stableford Competition, Jeong Sool Meng won the Al Farsi Trophy, and Stephen Watters captured the Sheikh Sabah Trophy.

Major

The Filipinos, who have become a major sports force in Kuwait, staged their annual tournaments again this year. The format for the games was however changed this year.

Unlike the previous years, when all the sports were held all at once, the events were scattered all over the year.

The Filipino basketball tournament sparked the most interest with KPBC emerging as champions after a close fight with EEL and Meriden, who were second and third respectively. The prizes

were donated by the Arab Times.

In the other Filipino events, the following emerged winners:

Bowling — Al Ghannam

men's title while National Cleaning — Mobil Oil won the women's title.

Chess, tennis and darts tournaments were all won by EEL.

The Arab Times, meanwhile, took a big step towards sponsoring big events by holding the First Kuwait Annual Offshore Powerboat Race. The race, which was somewhat marred by the strong winds on the day of the competition, attracted a lot of interest and will probably attract a bigger entry in the coming year.

A raft race was also held this year. It attracted over 30 entries and more than 4,000 spectators. The race was won by the Harriers.

On the Kart track, Rob Baker

remained as brilliant as ever and

proved that the other drivers will have to come up with something extraordinary if they are to stop him from taking the National's Driver's Championship.

Baker has so far scored easy wins in four rounds of the event and seems to be cruising towards the title. The only time that Baker lost this year was in the Enduro, for the Ahmad Driver's Challenge Cup, which was won by Eric Andrews.

Unlucky

The Kuwait Nomads, mean-

while, celebrated their 40th year of rugby in Kuwait by winning the Middle East XV-a-side tournament.

In the other tournaments, Rising Stars won the Mitsubishi Galant Trophy, Incredibles took the United Goans Trophy, Rising Stars captured the Ida Ferns Memorial Trophy and Goa Maroons lifted the Salcede Gold Cup.

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Eid Falah came second in the Kuwait leg of the Jeep Rally.



reproduced the conditions of the Middle East Championship, a series which no driver who is not in a fully works prepared and supported specialist rally car can hope to win. However, the Range Rover ran only 14 seconds behind the first of the Pajeros, and a full 3 minutes 17 seconds ahead of the second, driven by Ibrahim Mattar, the Bahrain Champion.

Tony Jakeman of Mitsubishi explained later that the jeeps concerned were old, and not the top standard Pajeros which would be used in say, the Paris-Dakar event. However, this suggests that Mitsubishi expected to get their win in Kuwait easily, and that they perhaps underestimated the quality of the competition.

In many ways the Kuwait event was an experimental event which was not entirely successful. However, it did see an exciting contest develop between Ahmed Al Hilal, driving a works prepared Mitsubishi Pajero, and Eid Falah driving a standard Range Rover.

Mitsubishi were later criticised for coming into the challenge with a vehicle which effectively

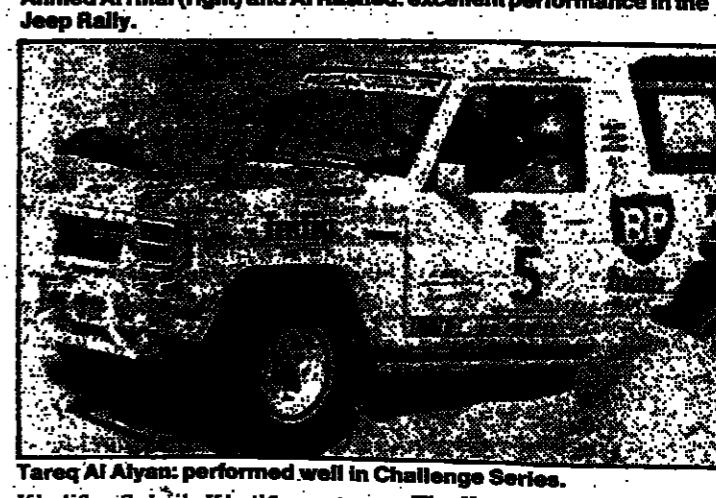
reproduced the conditions of the Middle East Championship, a series which no driver who is not in a fully works prepared and supported specialist rally car can hope to win. However, this suggests that Mitsubishi expected to get their win in Kuwait easily, and that they perhaps underestimated the quality of the competition.

It has to be added that many of Kuwait's better drivers did not have the confidence in the series to spend the money required to prepare an adequate vehicle.

The event was expected to be widely attended by drivers throughout the Gulf, but opposition from the Al Nasr Club in Dubai was strong, and the expected participation of Ahmed



Al Hilal (right) and Al Rasheed: excellent performance in the Jeep Rally.



Tareq Al Alyan: performed well in Challenge Series.

The Kuwaiti drivers put up a remarkable performance. Four of them finished among the top six. Al Wazzan was a little unlucky to finish second, after Qatari Abbas Al Mousawi.

Al Hilal secured the third position in Bahrain. Eid Falah came fourth and Tareq Alyan sixth. After three rounds of the Challenge series, Kuwaitis occupied the top three positions. Al Hilal was in first place. Alyan was lying second and Falah third.

With the last round to be held in Jordan, the Kuwaiti drivers are now poised to take the top honours.

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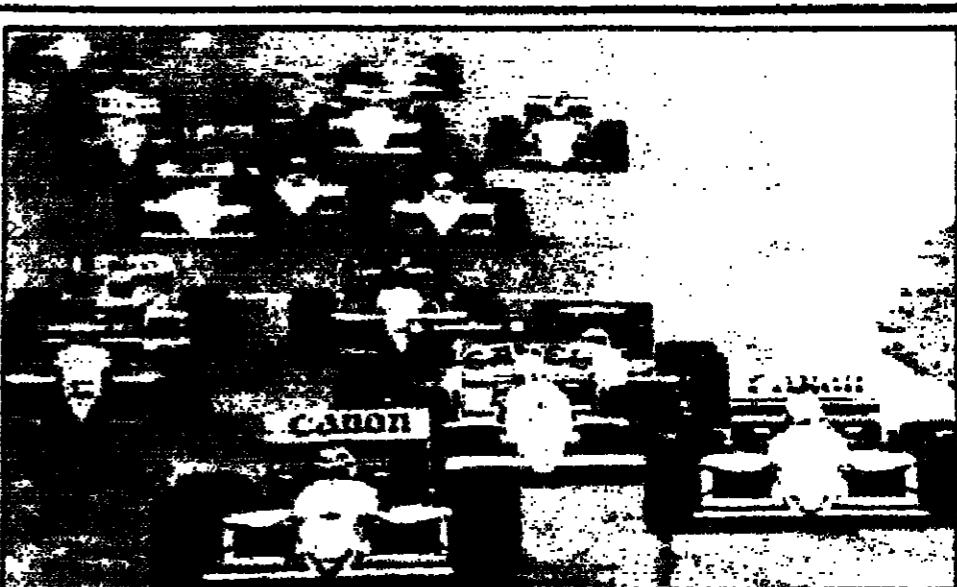
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European team captain Tony Jacklin is 'crowned' by his team after winning the Ryder Cup.



Australian cricket captain Allan Border collects the Reliance World Cup trophy.



Piquet (leading) won the Formula One drivers' title for the third time.

UGLY DISEASE OF CROWD HOOLIGANISM SPREADS ACROSS EUROPE

Johnson's astonishing run highlights 1987 sporting year

LONDON (Reuters) Few sporting clashes have been more keenly awaited than the 100 metres showdown between Ben Johnson and Carl Lewis at the Rome World Athletics Championships last August. And none can ever have exceeded expectations to the same extent, as the confrontation spurred Johnson to a test that stood head and shoulders above any other in the 1987 year in sport.

Established

Johnson not only won the contest to find the world's fastest man, but also smashed the world record by a phenomenal 0.10 of a second.

The powerful Canadian demolished the lissom Lewis, quadruple Olympic gold medallist, in a time of 9.93 seconds. Lewis equalled the previous record of 9.93 but finished a metre behind.

Twelve minutes later, Bulgaria's Stefka Kostadinova scored through the warm night air almost unnoticed to break her own world women's high jump record and after only two days' competition the second World Championships were firmly established as 1987's premier sporting event.

Johnson's incandescent performance highlighted a special year in athletics. The gifted Moroccan Said

Aouita became the first man to run under 13 minutes for the 5,000 metres taking the world title with consummate ease. And American Jackie Joyner-Kersee proved indisputably she is the greatest all-round women's athlete in the world, ending the season with the world heptathlon

Acrimony dogged Formula



Johnson (right) outclassed Lewis on his way to the 100 metres world record.



Aouita indicates that he is number one in the world after breaking the 13-minute barrier.

record and world championship.

But the euphoria after Johnson's win was not to last.

Within 24 hours Lewis was telling anyone who cared to listen that it was far from over.

"I feel a strange air at these championships," he told a television interviewer. "A lot of people have come from nowhere and are running unbelievably. There are gold medallists at this meet already that are on drugs."

Lewis' accusations haunted the rest of the sporting year.

Australian women's javelin thrower Sue Howland was banned from the World Championships after a positive test and Swiss 1,500 metres women's bronze medallist Sandra Gasser was banned for two years after failing a dope test.

But use of banned drugs was only one of many negative aspects of a turbulent year in which controversy blighted nearly all major sports.

Diseases

There was little on-field soccer news in the full after last year's World Cup but the ugly disease of crowd hooliganism continued to spread across Europe.

In Scotland, four players were charged with criminal offences after a violent Glasgow match between Rangers and Celtic.

In the Netherlands, a European Championship qualifying tie against Cyprus was halted for an hour after a firework was thrown on the pitch, injuring the Cypriot goalkeeper.

And in the Soviet Union, police watched helplessly as rival gangs, armed with bricks, rocks and clubs battled on a railway station.

Cycling was another sport afflicted by drugs, affecting even the Tour de France.

Two riders, including stage winner Guido Bontempi of Italy, were fined and given suspended one-month sentences after positive dope tests.

Competed

But Stephen Roche became Ireland's hero when he added the Tour to his Giro d'Italia triumph. He completed a treble only achieved by Belgian Eddy Merckx by winning the World Championship Road Race in Austria.

Horse racing was marred by the jailing of former top jockey Lester Piggott for three years for tax evasion.

Tennis was virtually trouble-free as Ivan Lendl stood master of almost all he surveyed, although his ruthless efficiency was not to everybody's taste.

Lendl was clearly the year's best, winning seven tournaments including his third French, US Open and Masters titles.

He was denied the Wimbledon crown in the final by dashing Australian Pat Cash, who blended consistency with his customary athleticism.

Former world number John McEnroe, however, had another difficult year and was suspended for two months after a vitriolic at the US Open.

Steffi Graf, 18, replaced Martina Navratilova, 31, as women's

world number one.

Navratilova won the Wimbledon and US Open titles but Graf earned top ranking with 11 tournament wins including the French Open.

Mike Tyson continued his awesome progression, ending his year by destroying Olympic champion Tyrell Biggs in seven rounds to retain all three versions of the heavyweight boxing title.

But Tyson, who has injected excitement into the heavyweight scene, had his problems outside the ring.

Charges of assault and battery after an incident in a parking lot were dismissed under a law allowing judges to use their discretion if victims were compensated in a settlement.

The year's most electrifying

player died in a brawl during a club match.

And cricket, long associated with sportsmanship, showed its dark side when a squabble between England captain Mike Gatting and a Pakistani umpire almost wrecked England's tour there.

But thankfully some sports remained free from controversy.

Jahangir Khan, unbeaten for five-and-a-half years on the squash circuit, relinquished the number one spot to 18-year-old Jansher Khan. By year's end, Jansher had taken his tally to seven, straight over his fellow-Pakistani.

Primo Zurbriggen became only the second man after France's Jean-Claude Killy to win four World Cup Alpine skiing titles in a season dominated by the Swiss.

But as the new season opened with skiers looking to the Winter Olympics, an Italian paramilitary policeman stole the limelight.

Alberto Tomba, nicknamed 'The Beast' because of his aggressive style, won four successive races and looked certain to star in Calgary.

Maintained

The sporting year had a sparkling start as Dennis Conner's Stars and Stripes won the America's Cup for the San Diego Yacht Club by 4-0 against Australian defender Kookaburra III.

Golf was one sport which maintained its high standards.

Europe's Ryder Cup team stunned the Americans in Muirfield Village, Ohio, by retaining their title.

Europe's team were ecstatic, the United States were shattered.

But non-playing American captain Jack Nicklaus recovered almost instantly to offer his congratulations as tears fell unashamedly from golfers and spectators alike.



Gatting (left) and Pakistani umpire Shakoor Rana were involved in a squabble which shook the cricket world.



Lendl remained undisputed king of tennis but lost the Wimbledon final to Cash.



Graff replaced Navratilova as women's world No. 1.



Jansher (right) beat Jahangir seven times this year to become world No. 1.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Squash rankings

LONDON, Dec 30. (Reuter): Jansher Khan ended Jahangir Khan's six-year reign as the world's leading squash player when he took over at the top of the latest rankings issued by the International Squash Players' Association today. Jahangir, five times world champion, was deposed by fellow-Pakistani Jansher for the first time since taking the top ranking of January 1 1982.

World Series

MELBOURNE, Dec 30. (Reuter): Australia replaced leg-spinner Peter Sleep with off-spinner Peter Taylor in their 12-man squad for the World Series Cup starting on January 2.

Norwich manager

LONDON, Dec 30. (Reuter): English First Division club Norwich City today confirmed Dave Stringer as their new manager. Stringer has been manager in a caretaker role since Ken Brown was dismissed in November.

Terry Fenwick

LONDON, Dec 30. (Reuter): Former England defender Terry Fenwick agreed to leave Queen's Park Rangers and sign for Tottenham in a £50,000 (\$1.02 million) transfer deal today.

Alpine skiing

BOLZANO, Italy, Dec 30. (AP): A men's downhill and a super-G, cancelled for lack of snow in Garmisch, West Germany, have been rescheduled in the French resort of Val d'Isere on Jan 9-10, the president of the World Cup Alpine skiing said today.

Seoul medals

SEOUL, South Korea, Dec 30. (AP): The Seoul Olympic Organising Committee displayed today samples of medals to be awarded to the top placers at next year's Seoul Olympics.

Top contender

LOUISVILLE, Ky., Dec 30. (Reuter): Claiborne Farm's Forty Niner, top contender for the US two-year-old thoroughbred championship, leads a handful of candidates nominated for the 1983 Kentucky Derby, Preakness and Belmont Stakes. Triple Crown Productions said yesterday.

Yacht race

SYDNEY, Dec 30. (Reuter): Australian maxi yacht Sovereign became the fifth boat in the 43-year history of the Sydney to Hobart race to win both line and handicap honours today.

Nelson Piquet

RIO DE JANEIRO, Dec 30. (Reuter): Brazil has named two of its top race tracks after three-time world Formula One champion Nelson Piquet, government sources said yesterday.

NBA games

NEW YORK, Dec 30. (Reuter): Results of National Basketball Association (NBA) games played yesterday (only games scheduled):

Milwaukee 106	New Jersey 88
Houston 101	Detroit 91
New York 123	Portland 117
Atlanta 108	Chicago 98
Dallas 126	Kings 117
Utah 98	Denver 97
Lakers 131	76ers 114



Paradise beat Eleven Stars

PARADISE Cricket Club beat Eleven Stars Cricket Club by 99 runs in a Quaid-e-Millat Trophy match at the Airport ground earlier this week.

Batting first, Paradise scored 181 for the loss of seven wickets. Latif was the highest scorer with 75 runs. Magsood hit 25. Nasir 21 and Anwar 20.

Unbeaten

In reply, Eleven Stars were all out for 82. Feroz with 21 and Aslam with an unbeaten 13 were the only batsmen to reach the double figures.

Latif, after performing well with the bat, excelled with the ball by capturing five wickets. Khalid supported him with four scalps.

BORDER & CO. CLINCH TEST SERIES

Australia hold out against Hadlee onslaught

MELBOURNE, Dec 30. (Reuter): Australia's last pair held out for four overs in the face of a rampant Richard Hadlee to draw the third and final Test against New Zealand today and win the first series success as Australian captain.

Australia, set 247 to win after dismissing New Zealand for 286 in the first over today, finished on 230 for nine, giving Allan Border his first series success as Australian captain.

Whitney, playing his first Test for six years in Australia, was left to face the last over from Hadlee as the required total for the loss of three wickets.

But Whitely was up to the task, punching the air with joy as he kept out the last ball. Hadlee, later named Man of the Match and Man of the Series, was the first to congratulate him and the two left the pitch arm in arm.

Hadlee finished with five for 65. After his five wickets in the first innings he became the first bowler to capture 10 or more wickets in a Test eight times.

Until today Border had not won a series, and only five Tests since taking over from a tearful Kim Hughes after the second Test against the West Indies in 1984-85.

Australia won the first Test in Brisbane by nine wickets and drew the second in Adelaide.

The 36-year-old medium-pacer looked set to take a record 374th Test scalp as number 11 Mike Whitney joined Craig McDermott at the wicket.

With the score on 227 for nine, Australia were still 20 runs away from victory and the two decided

Boon and Geoff Marsh were dropped in the slips by the Crowe brothers before Marsh was dis-

missed for 23, caught by John Bracewell at second slip off Hadlee.

Dean Jones survived his normal torrid welcome from Hadlee but then fell to the gentle medium pace of Ewen Chatfield, becoming the 37-year-old bowler's first

victim of the series when he was caught close in for eight.

Border looked uncomfortable but Boon was in fine fettle, hitting Morrison for consecutive fours to bring up his 50. He tried for a third in the same over, mistimed his drive and Martin

missed for 23, caught by John Bracewell at second slip off Hadlee.

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